



# Concordia Theological Monthly



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# Concordia Theological Monthly

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# Concordia Theological Monthly

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## Truth in a Changing World

By LEROY C. RINCKER \*

WHEN I survey the beauties of Concordia Seminary and attempt to evaluate its current contributions to the Church, I am impressed with evidences of great changes that have marked the progress of this school during the past thirty years. Its larger enrollment and increasing facilities, its graduate school and mission department, its revised curriculum and wider program, all are evidences of an awareness of opportunities to enter the many doors that are opening to our Church today. We are genuinely and humbly grateful, however, that these changes never affected the loyalty of Concordia to God and His blessed Word. There are evidences that not every church body has fared so well. In an old eastern town there are two large churches built so close to each other that a man can almost span the distance between them. When the first church was built, the members believed in the Trinity and accepted the Bible as God's Word. Sometime later a group of dissenters denied the Trinity and built the second church. This was tragedy enough, but today both churches have forsaken the truth and denied the Trinity. They stand as earnest warnings to all churches to guard their precious heritage against any desire for change that is born of pride and rebellion against God. If there have been significant changes in schools and churches which were dedicated to the unchanging God, who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever, in churches sworn to undying alle-

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\* Professor Rincker, president of Concordia College, Milwaukee, Wis., delivered this address at the graduation exercises of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, June 6, 1952. At this time Professor Rincker, together with four other clergymen, received the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*.

giance to His abiding Word, then it is not at all startling to observe vast changes, crises, and revolutions in all the institutions of society and in the relations of men and nations to each other throughout the world. We must agree with the observation of Ovid:

There's nothing constant in the universe,  
All ebb and flow, and every shape  
That's born bears in its womb the seeds of change.

Much of the change we witness is good and constitutes progress, the lifting of our sights, and the widening of our horizons. This is the type of change that has been effected here at Concordia Seminary. The world, too, has made many changes that are beneficial to men. Improvements in transportation and agriculture, in medicine and diet, have brought more of the good things of life into the homes of more people than ever before. But it needs no sage to tell us, nor is it the exaggerated and gloomy analysis of the pessimist, that the multitudinous changes in the world about us are predominantly bad and are hurrying us on to ominous crises or a tragic day of reckoning.

On the larger scene of the world we see ancient and far-flung empires crumbling and disintegrating; new powers, ambitions, greedy and fierce, are fastening their tentacles with diabolical cleverness on sleepy, soft, and sybarite peoples. Almighty God, who shook the nations of the earth with devastating political convulsions to prepare for the coming of His Christ, is shaking the earth once more and thundering His call to repentance. As these eruptions break forth all around us, the peace we so devoutly hope for is threatened anew; new fears grip the hearts of men; new anti-Christ's attack the Church of God. "Change and decay in all around I see."

Nor are the changes in our own dear country less revolutionary and alarming. Washington with his farewell warnings is laughed out of countenance. A new foreign policy has entangled us in the affairs of most nations of the earth; we have built up an economic empire that straddles the earth like a new colossus. By pouring billions into the bottomless coffers of unfriendly nations we hope to buy their allegiance. The nation that once boasted: "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute," quietly ransoms its citizens from piratical powers. Corruption has left the scenes of

picayune ward pickings and invaded the highest and most honored offices of the land, whose shady dealers brazenly face television cameras, but cravenly refuse to testify lest they incriminate themselves. We have tried to offset the failures in these vital areas of our national life with a program of colossalism. "Not being able to make our values beautiful, we make them huge." But the tallest skyscrapers of the world and the greatest dam, as well as the huge cyclotron and the devastating hydrogen bomb, will not allay the fears of our countrymen who stand in awe of these changes.

A cross section of the present obviously represents vast changes if compared with a picture of twenty-five years ago or even of yesterday. More ominous, however, is the fact that even the future is not what it used to be. It, too, has changed considerably during the past years. In former times men found comfort in the vague promises and uncertainties of the future. Time, they felt, would heal all wounds. Brighter prospects, recovery from social and economic ills, all were "just around the corner." Political graft and corruption might have to be endured for a while, but then would come "a new broom," to sweep all things clean again. But today the future seems to be stacked against us. Man may boast that his achievements in the fields of science and in the realm of thought have done much to bring about this change.

In the first place man has succeeded in conquering space and in annihilating distance. By the multitude of his inventions he has made the world into one big whispering gallery and has removed the barriers that formerly kept the nations in their own back yard. Oceans and mountains no longer divide us. We can no longer withdraw from the disputes and quarrels of the nations and live self-sufficiently in our own bailiwick. We must therefore learn to live at peace with each other, or we shall be fighting to the death.

However, living peaceably with his neighbor has never been characteristic of man even in the days when space and distance were real and vast. What will he do today when he must live close to people whose political and social philosophy mean death and destruction to everything he holds dear? For Americans it means that Communism has become so strong, and its dominion over the minds and souls of men is spreading with such speed,

that there can be no uncertainty in anyone's mind about an eventual clash that will bring every one of us into the valley of decision. It is already sheer stupidity merely to hope inately for a brighter day, hopefully hugging the future only to find it a delusive phantom.

Finally, I might suggest that the future has become a terrifying certainty because man now has discovered the power by means of which he can destroy himself and his entire civilization. The days of easy and smug security are definitely gone. The clouds on the horizon are lowering, and they threaten to remain.

As sincere and humble Christian believers we know that these downward changes that have characterized most of the modern era and are crowding the scene in recent years are the results of sin. The vast majority of men are trying to live without God; they ignore His loving appeals to repent; they brazenly violate His holy Law and laugh at His threats of retribution. The Prophet Hosea might have been writing about our day when he described his own: "There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God, in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery they break out, and blood toucheth blood."

When we can trace the causes of these disintegrating and degrading changes in our culture to overt violations of God's Moral Law, it is relatively easy for the Christian and the man of God to set up his defenses and to level his attacks. But the reason for many of the ills that have been multiplying in recent years and crowding in upon our own lives often lies in a less obvious source of corruption. It may often begin in the respectable atmosphere of the schoolroom or in the learned discourse of the philosopher. It is intimately linked up with the system of truth accepted by the majority of those in strategic positions.

Now, truth is an attribute of God. In spite of Pilate and his ilk there *is* a body of absolute truth. This truth is of God; it *is* God. Jesus said: "I am the Truth"; and in His high-priestly prayer He assures us that we may know and experience this Truth in the volume of His revelation. He also comforts us with the blessed promise that we may fully comprehend this truth if we permit His Spirit, whom He will send into our hearts, to lead us into

all truth. You and I by the grace of God have come into possession of this full and absolute truth. Our eyes have seen the King, and we know Him to be the blessed Trinity, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. From this fountainhead of truth we have learned the will of God, His holy Law, as well as the reality and significance of sin and of God's grace in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

This truth, as we know it and believe it, is not accepted by the majority of men today. Many statesmen, teachers, philosophers, and even churchmen give lip service to it while they adulterate it with wishful thinking and twist every phrase of God's revelation to suit their own pet perversions. Most men deny the existence of a body of absolute truth and blandly relegate every claim that there is a reality beyond the reach of man's senses to the field of superstition and fruitless speculation. Truth for them is the knowledge they gain empirically by their own experiments and research, by weighing, measuring, and testing. They have accepted natural science as a more reliable body of truth than religion, theology, and even philosophy.

The mind that begins with this premise, that nothing really exists beyond the grasp of the senses, materializes everything. Man becomes a mere chance concatenation of genes, a complex of electrons and protons, an animal organism. Men who build a culture on this concept naturally rule out everything spiritual and substitute material values. Wealth becomes for them the highest good, the common denominator, the incentive to work and sacrifice, and the means of achieving everything that is useful and pleasant. It ultimately becomes the criterion of good and bad, right and wrong.

While Christian theology emphasizes the unchangeableness of God and declares Him to be the same, yesterday, today, and forever, the system of materialistic, sensate truth allows no exception to the rule of change. All things are temporal and relative. If there are no eternal values, then only the present moment is real and desirable. What this does to a sense of responsibility, to moral restraint, and every relationship of man to man is easily imagined. And if all values are relative, everything is vitiated. Who will then dare distinguish between truth and error, the moral and the immoral? If things are going to smash in many parts

of the world and are threatening to break up in America, this bastard system of truth may be a very real cause.

There are those who try to harmonize this perversion of truth with the absolute truth of God. Not yet ready to give up religion altogether, they consciously or unconsciously imitate the thought processes they have been following in the sciences and in the social sciences. Under this compulsion religion, too, must become primarily utilitarian in an earthly sense. It is natural that it then degenerates into a kind of social gospel, a mixture of ethical, religious, and nationalistic vagueness, calculated to help man get the most out of the all-important present moment.

In the schools of the world and of our country this same system of sensate truth avoids the areas of real knowledge and wisdom that seek to understand the nature of God and His will, as well as the nature of true reality and lasting values, and fosters "useful" knowledge and crafts that prepare men and women to get the largest possible share of the goods of the world.

This, then, is the rather gloomy picture of the changing and changeable world into which you are being sent by your heavenly Father. True, you are called to little islands of faith where men still accept the absolute truth of God and attempt to live according to His abiding standards. But you have a second obligation. You must put forth every effort you can spare to rescue as many as possible among those still groping in the darkness of error or sinking in the sands of sin.

You may well ask: Is there any hope? Does any time remain? Are we not hastening to the end of all things? Or is there a possibility that this is but the end of an era and that a new culture and a new civilization may yet be built on the ruins of materialism? God has not given us an answer to these questions, and the best thinking of men is divided. You know that Oswald Spengler is a prophet of doom and speaks of the contemporary crisis as the death agony of Western culture and society. At the other extreme is the penetrating and systematic analysis of Pitirim Sorokin. He holds that we are in a most difficult period of transition and that such transitions have always produced tragic explosions — brutality, wholesale destruction, gangsterism, war, and revolution. He, too, is greatly alarmed by the extent of the present crisis, for it involves



the whole of our culture: Its fine arts, science, philosophy, religion, social and economic relations, and our ways of thought and life. Yet he believes it to be the end of an epoch and holds out the hope of a better day if those who would spearhead the move will only come in the name of the Lord.

It really makes little difference whether it be the one or the other. Our duty, as men of God and His ambassadors, is exactly the same in either case. We must work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work. For vast numbers the night will come every day we live. For them the time of grace will have ended. The Lord commends them to your love and compassion and to your holy zeal. He has called you to the conquest "for such a time as this," and He has equipped you with the armor of His truth and the weapons of His might. Stand fast in this truth and might, and you will be able to tear down the tall defenses of error and to storm the citadels of pride. Your unchanging God will be fighting on your side with the weapons of His omnipotence. He who gave victory to the arms of Moses, who rescued Jeremiah from the hatred of his countrymen, who enabled Paul to endure more for Christ than all the disciples, who blessed the work of Luther in spite of Pope and Emperor, this God is your God forever and ever; He will be your Guide even unto death.

As long as time remains, you may be sure that your ministry of the Word of Truth will be successful. God has promised to bless it and to perform His miracles through you. Who knows what great blessings the Lord may yet provide for our nation and the world if all of us boldly chide the sins and abuses that are so common and at the same time proclaim from the housetops the free grace in Jesus Christ! While sin is a reproach to any people, righteousness has often exalted a nation and will do so again. The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.

In the narrower field of your parish ministry, however, you will find an opportunity to render service that is truly divine and will bear fruits abundantly. Those who accept the absolute and sublime Truth of God and wait upon the Lord may be troubled on every side, yet not distressed; they may be perplexed, but not in despair; for they know God and live in the forgiveness of sin. In the arms

of their omnipotent Redeemer they have the power to conquer fear. Though life becomes cheap in this world and they be forsaken by men, they will know that God has not forsaken them. He has purchased them with the blood of His holy Son and now prizes His possession so highly that He speaks of His redeemed as the jewels of His crown. And should that great day of God's wrath come soon and overwhelm the world with terror, those who know and believe the Truth need not hide in caves and holes in the rocks, but may confidently lift up their heads with joy to meet their Savior and know that their own redemption draweth nigh. To be permitted to serve men with these divine assurances is the greatest privilege on earth. There can be no frustration in your work, for you are partners and coworkers with God.



# The Wrath of God and the Grace of God in Lutheran Theology\*

By WM. F. ARNDT

## I

EVERY Lutheran theologian, at hearing these terms, will admit, I think, that in discussing them we deal with the very heart of theology, and not only of theology, but of religion itself. Wherever religion has not developed into a mere caricature, but is live, spontaneous, heartfelt, real, it occupies itself, among other things, with these concepts. The statements that an individual or whole groups make about them may be entirely erroneous and objectionable or highly unsatisfactory, but, at any rate, occupying one's self with them is unavoidable — the human heart simply has to come to grips with these matters. The explanation is that we are moral beings, having a sense of right and wrong, and that, moreover, we have implanted in us a certain knowledge of God which compels us to ask, How about the wrath of God and the grace of God?

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\* No topic of Lutheran theology is currently so relevant in European Lutheranism as the relation of divine wrath and divine grace, the distinction between Law and Gospel, *Gericht und Gnade*. Several factors account for this interest, especially the terrifying experiences under the Nazi regime and the final collapse in 1945. In part the renewed interest in this topic is due to the rise of Dialectical Theology after the First World War, which in its attack upon the false optimism of Liberalism proclaimed the wrath of God in unmistakable terms but at the same time fell into a peculiar mingling of Law and Gospel. More recently the Lundensian theology in its "classical" theory of the Atonement has compelled Lutherans to re-study the reality of the wrath of God. Because of the primacy of divine wrath and divine grace in contemporary Lutheran theology the participants at the Free Conference to be held at Berlin-Spandau will devote six sessions to a discussion of this topic. (Cf. C. T. M., 1952, 288 ff.) Undoubtedly one or two essays will be submitted to this conference in which "the wrath of God and the grace of God in the modern proclamation" will be set forth in great detail. In the hope that one of these essays will be available for publication in our journal, Dr. Arndt has terminated his historico-dogmatical study with the situation as it obtained immediately prior to World War I.

F. E. M.

## II

When we go to our Lutheran Confessions to see what our Church in the sixteenth century taught on these matters, we are struck by the noteworthy fact that the approach used by the founding fathers to these concepts was altogether a practical one. They were driven to discuss these matters by their personal needs and experiences, by the conviction of their sinfulness, by the joyful discovery they had made that there is a Savior, and by the triumphant assurance that the forgiveness of sins is not merely spoken of in the Creed, but is actually granted by God for Christ's sake. To put it differently, for the fathers the wrath of God was a great reality about which they had not merely read in books, but the withering blasts of which they had felt in their own hearts. Likewise the grace of God was to them not a mere *titulus*, but a boon which had come to them like the dawn of a bright morning after a night of harrowing gloom and destructive storms. In the Confessions of our Church the heart, and not merely the head, speaks. That is one reason why, for instance, the Augsburg Confession and the Smalcald Articles never lose their charm and freshness, but every time we open them, grip us with new power and edify us with treasures which we perceive are inexhaustible. In up-to-date parlance, what the Lutheran Confessions submit on the wrath of God and the grace of God can truly be called existential teaching, as opposed to teaching that is considered merely logically or scientifically satisfying.

## III

Perhaps a word of caution is in place here. What I have spoken of is the *approach* of the Confessions. The approach to a doctrine must not be confused with the source of the doctrine. The confessors were absolutely Bible Christians and took their theology from the Holy Scriptures. It is true that they did not refuse to read in the book of nature and to listen to the voice of conscience; they recognized those religious truths which, I think, St. Paul has in mind, at least in part, when he speaks of the "elements of the world" in Gal. 4:3, the ABC of religion, that is, those religious notions which are found with all people and among which we may number the knowledge of the Law inscribed in the hearts of men.

But apart from such matters the confessors base their theology solely on the Scriptures. They were *sola Scriptura* theologians; they desired to follow not the Church, not the Pope, not human reason, but divine revelation.

#### IV

We first ask, What do the Confessions teach about the wrath of God? And since there has been a good deal of controversy connected with this concept, the major part of my paper will deal with it. All of us know the words of Dr. Luther found in his Small Catechism. When explaining the stern statement of God about Himself as the jealous God, Luther says: "God threatens to punish all that transgress these Commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath and not act contrary to them." The wrath of God is taught as a reality and as something to be feared.

In the Large Catechism (I, 330), in the section in which Luther treated of the Conclusion of the Ten Commandments, he says: "This, I say, is profitable and necessary always to teach to the young people, to admonish them and to remind them of it, that they may be brought up not only with blows and compulsion like cattle, but in the fear and reverence of God. For where this is considered and laid to heart that these things are not human trifles, but the commandments of the divine majesty who insists upon them with such insistence, is angry with and punishes those who despise them, and on the other hand abundantly rewards those who keep them, there will be a spontaneous impulse and a desire gladly to do the will of God." In I, 333, Luther reiterates this thought and says that God enjoins the commandments with His greatest wrath and punishment.

The Catechisms of Luther appeared in 1529. The next year came the Diet at Augsburg, at which our chief confession, the Augsburg Confession, was presented. It is in keeping with the whole character of this Confession that it does not present long metaphysical arguments for its various teachings, but in simple, straightforward manner sets forth the faith of the men that submitted the document. See how the wrath of God is spoken of in Article II, which treats of Original Sin. According to the Latin text Melancthon says of the Lutheran churches:

Also they teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten

in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence, and that this disease, or vice of origin, is fully sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost.

It will be noted that the word "wrath" does not occur here. The German version, however, which, as we know, was read on June 25, 1530, in Augsburg, speaks of the "ewige Gotteszorn," the eternal wrath of God, to which we on account of original sin have become subject.

In Article III we have the same interesting difference between the German and Latin texts. The German text says that Christ became a sacrifice, "*dass er . . . Gottes Zorn versoebnte*," while the Latin says that the purpose of His work was to reconcile the Father to us. I have no explanation to offer for avoidance of the word "wrath" (*ira*) in the Latin. It must be remembered that the Latin was written first and that the translation into German was not made by Melancthon himself, the author of the Latin text, but by Justus Jonas, who undoubtedly chose the phraseology which appeared to him most idiomatic and virile. It is evident that there is no difference in meaning between the two versions.

How seriously the reforming fathers took the wrath of God we see furthermore from some passages in the Apology. In III, 7 Melancthon writes: "Then, too, how can the human heart love God while it knows that He is terribly angry and is oppressing us with temporal and perpetual calamities?"

In Apology IV (II), 37, where Melancthon speaks of the love we owe God, he says:

It is easy for idle (*otiosi*) men to feign such terms concerning love, as that a person guilty of moral sin can love God above all things, because they do not feel what the wrath or judgment of God is. But in agony of conscience and in conflicts with Satan, conscience experiences the emptiness of these philosophical speculations.

We see, Melancthon considers the matter not merely from the professor's chair, in academic isolation, but gives it a very practical turn and relates it to the needs of the Christian.

In the Formula of Concord, to settle the controversy that had

arisen on the subjects "Law" and "Gospel," Article V definitely speaks of the wrath of God. In Par. 17 the confessors say, "The Law threatens its transgressors with God's wrath and temporal and eternal punishment." No language could be plainer.

The teaching of God's wrath was not elaborated in the Confessions to any great extent because it was simply considered to be universally accepted, and apparently there were no special attacks made on it in the controversies in which the Confessions have their origin.

One more word on the attitude of the authors of our Confessions. The intellectual difficulty which later generations of theologians profess to find in the concept "wrath of God" they evidently did not consider formidable enough to let it influence their thinking in dealing with the simple teaching of Scripture on this subject. That the apparent clash between the wrath of God and the love of God was not noticed by them we surely do not wish to aver. Everybody who gives the subject any thought at all will instinctively ask himself when he reads the Scriptures how wrath and grace can exist simultaneously in the all-wise, the perfect God; one seems to exclude the other. The attitude of the Lutheran confessors was that sin is a reality which cannot be denied by anybody; and if sin exists, God's wrath has to exist, too, because God is holy and just. And they found their comfort not in the denial of divine anger, but in the grace of God and the work of Christ.

Wherever Lutherans have been eager to adhere to the faith of the Confessions this teaching has continued through the centuries. Eduard Preuss in his famous book *Die Rechtfertigung des Suenders vor Gott* (Berlin, 1868) voiced the old Lutheran convictions when he said,

Who believes that God is wrathful, and who is afraid of His anger? The wicked make it an object of mockery and look upon it as a strawman which is put into the grainfield to scare the birds. But when He in His own appointed time will come and turn everything to dust and ashes, they will have to take notice. For God is indeed angry; and whoever does not observe the breath of His wrath in history, let him learn it from God's infallible Word.

When Walther in *Law and Gospel* (p. 46, German edition) says that the Law must be preached in such a way that the hearers fancy they are visited by a terrifying thunderstorm and see the lightning of divine wrath flash before them—he voices the old Lutheran position. When Luthardt, the famous theologian of Leipzig, in his compend of Dogmatics (p. 129, second edition), says: "As a result of sin the human race is the object of the wrath of the holy God," he gives expression to the old Lutheran teaching on this subject.

## V

In the seventeenth century, the age of Lutheran scholasticism, we find the teaching of the wrath of God maintained in full vigor, even though the presentation often veers from the free, natural, simple mode of the reformers to one that is somewhat stiff, circuitous, and artificial. The Socinians had come forward with a definite denial of the teaching that there is wrath in God. As one ponders their objections to the Lutheran doctrine, the words of Ecclesiastes come to mind, "There is nothing new under the sun." The arguments which the Socinians employed are exactly those which are being urged today. It is impossible that God should have become reconciled to us, because that would presuppose the existence of wrath in Him, and that is simply inconceivable. The orthodox Church overlooks, so it was stated, that St. Paul does not say, God was reconciled to the world, but "He reconciled the world to Himself." It is true, of course, that the grand passage 2 Cor. 5:18 ff. reads: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." God reconciled the world to Himself—so it is written. How the Lutheran scholars of the seventeenth century replied we can see from the words of Abraham Calovius, quoted Baier III, p. 113:

The Socinians object it is not written that Christ reconciled God to us, but that we through the death of Christ have been reconciled to God. We answer: 1. It amounts to the same thing whether it is stated that Christ is reconciled to us or that we have been reconciled to God, because in either way He removed



the enmity which existed between us and God. For just as man was an enemy to God, so God was to man, having been offended on account of sin, and this enmity had to be removed on both sides in order that a reconciliation between them might take place. 2. However, that the Scriptures rather say that we have been reconciled to God than God to us is due to this, that God is the offended party, but man the offender. But if a person offends somebody, he is said (if reconciliation occurs) to become reconciled to the one whom he offends. Thus we are commanded to become reconciled to the one whom we offended (Matt. 5:23), and a woman is ordered to become reconciled to the husband whom she has vexed (1 Cor. 7:11), and by the same token Christ is said to reconcile us to God, us who offended God and against whose wickedness the wrath of God was revealed from heaven. But whatever may be the case, it all, as I have said, amounts to the same thing; especially if this is established that on both sides, and not merely on one, there was hostility. Then it will be very patent that not only with respect to one, but with respect to both parties involved, a reconciliation was made. The two clashing parties who had to be reconciled are God and man. That man was inimical to God before he was reconciled, no one will dispute; but that God hated man as a sinner (*tamquam peccatorem*) before a reconciliation between them was brought about, we have proved elsewhere from divine holiness and justice as well as from clear testimonies of Holy Scripture. Cf. Ps. 5:6; 45:8; Rom. 1:18, 32; Gal. 3:13. Furthermore, that Christ removed the cause of God's wrath, that is, that He atoned for sins and that He rescued us from wrath, that again is most evident from the Scriptures. Therefore He made reconciliation not only in order to reconcile man to God, but likewise God to man. (*Soc. profl.*, p. 496.)

The method of argumentation employed by Calovius may appear somewhat antiquated, but can we deny that he brings out great truths? It will pay us to look at the passages from the Scriptures which Calovius adduces. He points to Ps. 5:6. We may quote verses 4, 5, 6 here from the English Bible (the Bible verse which Calovius undoubtedly has in mind particularly is v. 5, which in the Hebrew Bible is v. 6).

For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness;  
neither shall evil dwell with Thee. The foolish shall not stand in  
Thy sight; Thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy

them that speak leasing; the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

The statement is made categorically, "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." What shattering words, which terrify us in our inmost being and which, moreover, find the full approval of our conscience! That our God is a holy God who will not countenance wrongdoing is here stated with paralyzing emphasis. Ps. 45:8 (7 in A. V.) says, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." The words are familiar; they are quoted in the New Testament as addressed to the Messiah. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness—God's wrath is kindled against everything that is wicked. Rom. 1:18 is the well-known passage beginning Paul's excoriation of the pagan world. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." V. 32 brings the following words of Paul with reference to wicked people: "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." In Gal. 3:13 we have the well-known words: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." *Curse* is simply an expression of wrath.

It has become quite common to say that God hates sin but loves the sinner. That statement evidently does not set forth the whole truth. It is gloriously true that God *loves* the sinner, but it is true, too, that God *hates* the sinner *qua* sinner, as far as he is a sinner, a transgressor. Sin, we must remember, does not appear in the abstract, but in the concrete, in persons; and in as far as man is addicted to unrighteousness and an enemy of God, he is hated by the just, the holy Creator of heaven and earth.

## VI

By and by came the era of Rationalism. Here with other matters the teaching of the wrath of God was shunted aside; and if the subject was still mentioned, it was with apologies or with the assertion that the old teaching had been extreme. That



we must not hold to anthropomorphic or anthropopathic views which are unworthy of God was emphasized — a position with which all of us heartily agree. The insinuation, of course, was that such views had been entertained by the old orthodox Lutheran theologians. "How can God, who is love, be at the same time the God of wrath?" it was asked. We see the Socinians had won many followers and allies. At first Rationalism proceeded cautiously; but soon it blossomed forth in unrestricted vigor. There arose preachers who declared the wrath of God to be non-existent, a mere figment of the mind. How the Rationalists viewed the wrath of God we can see from a writing by J. C. Dippel, who called himself Christianus Democritus. His book was published in 1733, and he called it *Hauptsumma der theologischen Grundlehren des Democriti*. Ritschl (*Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 337 f.) gives this summary of Dippel's views: "In particular, Dippel's assertion that God's purpose is to destroy sin, but not the sinner, corresponds to that relative idea of the State which regards it as the means for the maintenance and well-being of individuals. In accordance with this idea the traditionary attribute of God, which guarantees the destruction of the sinner, His wrath, to wit, had to be partly denied, partly altered. Inasmuch as God is Love, there is, properly speaking, no wrath in Him, or His wrath is nothing but a chastisement which flows from love and which leads men to Him, although it does not take place without great pain. For as sins do no detriment to God's perfection and cannot hurt or injure Him, but only bring disadvantage for man himself in his relation to God, God has no occasion to take heed of sins committed or demand satisfaction for them, but only in love will He direct His attention to them in order that for the future we to our own advantage may lay aside such bad behavior." This means that the teaching of God's wrath, in the real sense of the word, has been put on the scrap pile of outworn ideas.

One naturally is interested in Schleiermacher's teaching on this subject because of his eminence as a theological thinker and leader. According to Ritschl (*Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 474), Schleiermacher follows with some modifications the type of doctrine taught by Abelard (died 1142). This celebrated medieval scholar did not teach that the wrath of God had to be

appeased and that through Christ's atonement this was accomplished; he found such teaching cruel and iniquitous because it taught that an innocent person had to suffer for the guilty. He held that Christ's work has to do with the sinner, and not with God, that its purpose was to move the sinner to manifest love. Schleiermacher similarly, as Ritschl says, rejects the forensically viewed penal justice of God and the divine Law (*op. cit.*, p. 483).

## VII

In the era which came after the shelving of crude, vulgar Rationalism, F. C. Baur and his colleagues of the Tuebingen School, together with David Friedrich Strauss, naturally rejected the teaching of God's wrath. They were interested in historical speculations, not in promulgating Scripture doctrine. About the same time came the Lutheran awakening, the renaissance or resurgence of Lutheranism in the last century. The Confessions were studied again, so were Luther's writings. It was springtime in our Church, the old trees sprouted, blossoms promising fruit appeared on them.

But then arose Albrecht Ritschl with his peculiar views. One of his critics said: "Led by Ritschl, we find that we have arrived at the delightful position where God's wrath no longer is known" (Boehl, cf. Pieper, *Chr. Dogm.*, II, p. 423 [Transl., II, 356]). Ritschl's position, as we all know, is marked by opposition to metaphysics and Pietism; but he has a good deal to say on the subject before us, and he declares that the teaching pertaining to God's wrath has to be discarded.

In this view he was followed by the most famous theologian of the past generation, Adolf von Harnack, who became the acknowledged leader in the field of what we usually refer to as Liberal theology. According to Harnack, the religion of Jesus can be summarized in three great points: 1. The Kingdom of God and its coming; 2. God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul; 3. The higher righteousness and the commandment of love. Cf. his *Wesen des Christentums*. It is evident that in such a system no room remains for the Biblical doctrine of the wrath of God and of the atonement.

To be a little more specific — how Harnack viewed the wrath of God is indicated by the following paragraph taken from an article of his published in the *Christian World*, a British paper,

in the winter of 1899—1900, and afterwards reprinted in a collection, *The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought*:

There is an inner law that compels the sinner to look upon God as a wrathful Judge. It is this conception of God which is the hardest and the most real punishment inflicted on sin. It tears the heart of man, transforms his thoughts of God into terror, robs him of peace, and drives him to despair. This conception of God is a false one, and yet not false, for it is the necessary consequence of man's sin—that is to say, of his godlessness. How can this conception of God be overcome? Not by words, but by deeds. When the Holy One descends to sinners, when He lives with them and walks with them, when He does not count them as unworthy, but calls them His brethren, when He serves them and dies for them, then the terror of the awful Judge melts away and they believe that the Holy One is love, and that there is something mightier still than justice—mercy.

One sees what has become of the wrath of God. It has turned out to be an idea that the wretched sinner entertains, buffeted by his accusing conscience, which idea, however, does not correspond to reality and hence has to be changed. The sinner has to be led to the conviction that the wrath of God is non-existent; that God is not a God of anger, but a God of mercy. In other words, the wrath of God has disappeared.

How different is this from the teaching of Philippi, one of the chief leaders in the Lutheran renaissance, who on a certain occasion wrote (Ritschl, *op. cit.*, p. 551):

He who takes away from me the atoning blood of the Son of God, paid as a ransom to the wrath of God, who takes away the satisfaction of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, vicariously given to the penal justice of God; who hereby takes away justification or forgiveness of sins only by faith in the merits of this my Surety and Mediator, who takes away the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, takes away Christianity altogether, so far as I am concerned. I might then just as well have adhered to the religion of my ancestors, the seed of Abraham after the flesh.

It will be recalled that Philippi was a converted Jew. His writings as a result are marked by the warmth felt by a person who has come upon a vital discovery.

## VIII

Thank God, we do not have to stop with this discussion of the wrath of the almighty God. The divine revelation tells us likewise about the grace of God, about God as the loving, merciful, Father who has pity on us in our unworthiness and provides help for us. Speaking of the grace of God, we refer to a quality, a disposition, or attitude in Him which moves Him to think of us in our sinful state and to send His Son for our redemption and the Holy Spirit for our regeneration and sanctification. This section should really be the major part of my paper. That it is brief is due to the exigencies of time and to the circumstance that the grace of God is hardly ever questioned, although, sad to say, its full glory is often dimmed and obscured.

We turn at once to our Confessions to see what they submit on this subject. As every reader of them knows, they are full of references to divine grace. Let me merely quote one passage from the Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, III, 9:

Concerning the righteousness of faith before God we believe, teach, and confess unanimously, in accordance with the comprehensive summary of our faith and confession presented above, that poor, sinful man is justified before God, that is, absolved and declared free and exempt from all his sins and from the sentence of well-deserved condemnation and adopted into sonship and heirship of eternal life, without any merit or worth of our own, also without any preceding, present, or any subsequent works, out of pure grace, because of the sole merit, complete obedience, bitter suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us for righteousness.

The statement is comprehensive and absolutely plain. The pure grace of God is definitely taught and exalted.

A few remarks of a general nature I should like to make. The term "grace of God" is not always used in the same sense in the Confessions. At times it refers to the fundamental attitude in God planning and bringing about our salvation; and at other times it has the meaning of forgiveness of sins, pardon. In the former instance, what we might call the *a priori* attitude of God is spoken of, in the latter the *a posteriori* attitude. The latter meaning we find, for instance, in the Apology, III, p. 177, where Melancthon

says of certain people: "When they see the works of saints, they judge in a human manner that saints have merited the remission of sins and grace through these works." — Another thought that obtrudes itself in me is that the Confessions, while they have many references to the grace of God, do not dwell on this subject as much as we might have expected. The antithesis against Rome took the reformers, even when the debate concerned itself with the area of grace, to different categories of thought, for instance, to the question whether justification is attained through faith or through good works; or the related one, whether Christ obtained for us forgiveness for all our sins or whether our own efforts have to assist in the work of procuring God's pardon. But at the basis of all thinking was the teaching that God is a God of mercy and love, who does not wish to see anybody perish but who desires to see all turn to repentance.

God's grace, it should be emphasized, is represented as free grace, not conditioned by anything we do. The Confessions, for instance, in the passage quoted, use the term "pure grace" to express that there is nothing coming from the outside that has influenced God and made Him gracious. It is the idea which we express by *sola gratia*. God is gracious because He is gracious; He loves because He is Love — that is the position of our Confessions.

But must one not say that it was the Cross of Christ which produced grace in God? No; that is not the way the Confessions look at it. The grace of God produced the saving Cross, and it was not the Cross which created God's grace. The grace of God is the foundation of all salvation, the redemption of Christ included. When the Confessions say that because of Christ's death we have a gracious God, they have in mind grace in the sense of forgiveness of sins, the *a posteriori* significance to which I pointed before.

The teaching of God's grace must not be modified in the interest of removing the gulf between divine wrath and divine grace. Both these concepts must be kept as representing great realities; their absoluteness must not be made doubtful. The Confessions show why the poor sinners who face damnation do not have to despair. It is the work of Christ which without destroying the least particle of the wrath of God and the grace of God has built

a bridge between them, so that both divine justice and divine grace can triumph. The wrath of God is terrible, but the Cross erected by divine Love fully satisfied all the demands of divine justice and thus quenches that consuming fire which threatened us. "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

## IX

The Formula of Concord foreshadowed the vehement conflict which came in the 17th and 18th centuries between the Calvinists and the Lutherans on the grace of God. The Calvinists by their teaching of a double predestination were putting this grace under heavy clouds. At the same time Lutheran theologians had to oppose the Arminians, who, in casting aside Calvinism, went to the other extreme, that of making man a co-author of salvation. In the Lutheran camp itself, too, voices were heard which in order to battle effectively against Calvinism did injury to the teaching of the *sola gratia*. In the age of Rationalism the love of God was spoken of; but how weak a factor it had come to be! How could anyone get excited over it when, after all, man's salvation rested chiefly on his own efforts, and the thing that counted was *Tugend* (virtue). In the speculations of the Tuebingen School, naturally, such things as the teaching of God's grace had merely a historical significance. But in the Lutheran renaissance, while sin was stressed, the grace of God was given its due place at the center of Christian teaching. In the Lutheran Church today, it is my conviction, the grace of God is preached with power. May all of us remain true to the great *sola gratia* teaching of our Confessions, not merely because it is a part of the Confessions for which we stand, but because it is taught in the Holy Scriptures and is the only basis of our hope.

St. Louis, Mo.



# Our Life of Faith

By W. F. BECK

This is the final installment in a series of three studies.

## FAITH DOES NOT EARN SALVATION

**F**AITH is spoken of as passive, a resting on a promise, a floating in the stream. "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Ps. 81:10; cp. 40:6; 51:15; 119:18). Paul says, "Christ took hold of me" (Phil. 3:12). John: "To all who accepted Him and believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (1:12; cp. 17:8; Rom. 5:11, 17; 9:30; Col. 2:6). Jesus told Paul that people "are made holy by believing in Me" (Acts 26:18; Rom. 3:22, 30).

But a man is no statue. He, not God, does the believing. Like the sensory process of seeing or of hearing, believing is active as well as passive. It is not a pressed flower in a book, but a living plant which receives nourishment only to grow and produce fruit. Believing is not only a *Sein*, but also a *Werden*, a dynamic activity, a struggle. Paul tells Timothy, "Fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12; cp. 2 Tim. 4:7).

Faith is an activity which is commanded. Someone has counted forty places where Jesus used the imperative "believe." Paul says to the jailer, "Believe" (Acts 16:31). "This is His commandment [ἐντολή]: We should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He commanded us" (1 John 3:23). To believe is to obey (Acts 6:7; Rom. 1:5; 6:17; 10:16; 15:18; 16:19, 26; 2 Thess. 3:14). As obedience, faith is an activity of the will. And so Jesus calls faith a work (ἔργον, John 6:29). He says: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will come into the kingdom of heaven—only he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matt. 7:21; cp. 12:50; Luke 8:21). Faith is a "turning" from sin to God. "I want the wicked to turn back from his way and live. Come back, come back, from your evil ways. Why will you die, people of Israel?" (Ezek.

33:11.) "A large number believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21; cp. 26:18,20).

The problem is this: If faith is an action of man, how can we be saved without works when we are saved by faith? Luther emphatically states: Faith is no work; and yet in other places he calls faith a work; and he says faith means to fear, love, and trust in God with all our hearts.

Nevertheless, we are not saved on account of our faith, but only by our faith. Whatever moral value anyone may find in faith, it cannot be counted in our justification.

The Bible makes it very clear that the term "faith" stands in contrast with any supposed good quality in man; it means "without works." "We hold that anyone is made righteous by faith without doing what the Law says" (Rom. 3:28; cp. vv. 20,27). "If instead of working you believe in Him who makes the ungodly righteous, your faith is counted as righteousness" (Rom. 4:5; cp. vv. 13-16; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9). "Not having my own righteousness based on the Law, but the righteousness which God gives when I believe in Christ" (Phil. 3:9). Luther: "In order to free myself from the attitude of the Law and of works, I often picture the matter as if there were in my heart no quality which we call faith or love, but in their place I put Christ Himself and say: He is my Righteousness" (*Erl. Ausg.* 58, 359).

Faith is not a work which moves God to save us. The cause of our salvation isn't something that God sees in man: When we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," our sins are not forgiven because we pray or because we believe. "Our sins are forgiven for His sake" (1 John 2:12). God, who forgives us, is looking at the same object as we do when we believe: There on the Cross is our salvation.

Faith does not give God anything. Nor does it give us anything; it cannot save. "Saving faith" would be a contradiction in terms, like a "nourishing dish," if it were not the metonymy of the container for its content. "Take this cup from Me," Jesus says (Mark 14:36), meaning the bitter drink in the cup.

We do not substitute faith for works. Faith substitutes the



work of Christ for works. Faith justifies, not by its action, but by what it accepts; not by its obedience, but by its object. Eating is necessary to get food, but only food nourishes. Not the hyssop, but the blood wards off the angel of death. It is not my holding Christ or my joy in Him that saves; it is His taking me and cleansing me. Love and forgiveness flow from Jesus; I hold my cup where it flows and receive one gift after another. It is not the shape of my cup or how clean it is that is effective; only what the cup holds quenches my thirst. If I hold a crumpled piece of paper in one hand and a hundred-dollar bill in the other, the holding is the same, but in the one hand I have nothing, in the other I have much. Firmly grasping the scrap of paper will not change it to money. If the content is nothing, my faith may be ever so strong, but it will not help me. Luther says: "Faith does not even justify inasmuch as it is the gift of the Spirit, but only inasmuch as it is related to Christ" (F. Pieper, *Dogmatik*, II, p. 527).

We have a similar problem in the Biblical synonyms of faith: "Come" (Is. 60:6; Matt. 11:28; John 6:44), "flow" (Is. 2:2-3), "run," "seek," "call" (Is. 55:5-6), "thirst," eat," "drink" (Is. 55:1; John 6:53-56; 7:37), "buy" (Is. 55:1), "follow" (John 8:12), "have the heart circumcised" (Rom. 2:29), "put on" (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27). Since πιστεύειν εἰς appears for the first time in the New Testament, the Apostles may have especially coined it; it has been defined as "striving towards," like a ship into harbor, or like an eagle flying to his food. Luther: "Gott will . . . dass man nach seiner Gnade ein inbruenstiges Verlangen tragen soll. Und eben dies tut der Glaube, welcher die Gnade fuer koestlich haelt und deswegen heftig nach derselben hungert und duerstet und sie also verlangt." (Walch, VII, 30.) "Der wahre Glaube umfaengt mit ausgestreckten Armen froehlich den Sohn Gottes" (*loc. cit.*, IV, 379-80). The Apology says: "Fides, quae iustificat . . . est velle"; and "quaerere . . . est vere credere" (*Trigl.*, pp. 134, 162-63). The simplest solution to the problem involved in these terms perhaps is this: Since we find justification and life as an integrated unit, only theoretically separable, one term is used to mean both, just as the term "Christian" means a person who believes in Christ and lives a godly life.

## WE SERVE GOD

Faith has two hands, a saving hand which gets salvation from God and a working hand which is active in love. If faith is inactive, it is not faith but sin. "If anyone knows what is right, but does not do it, he is sinning" (James 4:17). "If I can prophesy, know all mysteries, and have all knowledge, *even if I have great faith*, enough to move mountains, but have no love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13:2). In Heb. 11:1,3 faith seems to be an intellectual act, but the rest of the chapter makes it mighty in deeds. Faith is alive inasmuch as it clings to Jesus. Good works do not make faith alive, but they prove that faith is alive, because real faith always "is working" (1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:11; James 2:26); it is "active in love" (Gal. 5:6).

Faith is the only channel in which our life pleases God (Heb. 11:6). It makes all the difference in the world. "By faith Abel brought to God a better sacrifice than Cain, for which he was declared righteous. God approved his offerings" (Heb. 11:4).

If we abstract a man's ordinary activities from his antagonism to God and consider them by themselves, many of them seem morally neutral. That is why, if we disregard sin and its forgiveness, much of the life of a converted man seems the same as it was before conversion. But by faith the dominating center, which determines the quality of the whole being, shifts from a sinful self to God. There is a growing re-orientation of the whole person of the believer so that he thinks, speaks, works, and judges differently from other people.

By sin a man is *incurvatus in se*. This egocentricity frustrates the tendencies to serve. When the God of love comes to man, He challenges him to a full and unreserved surrender (Luke 9:57-62). "He died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:15). "As people who have risen from the dead and live, give yourselves to God, and let God use the organs of your bodies as tools of righteousness" (Rom. 6:13). When I believe, the self-centered spirit of sin is broken, the lord of self gives up his throne, and the scepter of my soul is put into the hand of Christ, who steps into my world to make it His own. "I was crucified with Christ, and I do not live any more, but Christ lives in me. The life I now

live in my body I live by believing in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:19-20.) Now I am a bundle of newly motivated impulses going out in all directions: I confess Him with all my heart, want to do things I have not done before, and lay out new plans of service. You "become altogether new in your mind" (Rom. 12:2). You have a "new self, created to be like God, righteous and holy in the truth" (Eph. 4:24). "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19; cp. 3:3). We "love one another heartily and intensely" (1 Peter 1:22).

#### WE LIVE IN GOD

Natural knowledge is an armed knight who marches over the land, testing his ground and making sure of it at every step, while beside him, just above the ground, moves the white-winged angel of Faith. Side by side they move until the path breaks off short on the verge of a precipice. Knowledge can go no farther since there is no footing for the heavy knight. But the white-winged angel rises majestically from the ground and moves across the chasm.

By faith Israel crossed the Jordan. The Lord had promised Joshua (3:13), "As soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of God, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the water of the Jordan, the water that flows down from above will be cut off and will stand like a wall." The river kept on flowing while the people were in their camp, and there was no lowering of the water level until they stepped into it. The people had to break camp, pack their goods, march to the bank of the river, and step into the stream before anything would happen to the Jordan. If they had stopped anywhere before that, nothing would have happened. They had only the promise, "I will be with you" (3:7). With that they stepped into the Jordan, and it made a path for them. Faith is taking God at His word about things unseen, unknown, untried, and unlikely.

If we want to understand first and then believe, we'll not get far. We need to believe first and then to grow in understanding. As Augustine said, the learned man fumbles to find the latch to the eternal, while the simple and poor have entered into the kingdom of heaven. In this world of sense we are limited to our natural

experiences, and if we try to look beyond them, our natural eyes see only a fog (1 Cor. 2:14). We need the eyes of faith to see the mountains of truth, which, behind the fog, are as real as on a clear day. Here we feel a frail body, but faith can see it glorified.

Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of Death . . .

And lands Thought smoothly on the further shore. — *Young*.

Faith passes by the immediate impressions of life with its evidence of the senses and of logic; it breaks through the crust of our subjective existence and, leaving limitations and transiency behind, comes to the supernatural. It brings with it the problems of life in order to lay them before Him who is enthroned in glory. There, it knows, doubt and fear will cease to plague it when it finds the infallible answers to every human inquiry. By a leap into the beyond it has gained a foothold there where truth is without a condition, ultimately real, a fountain pure and original, from which everything gets its meaning and value.

There we must expect something different from what we have here. Livingstone tried to explain to an African chief just what ice was and how it was formed. The chief told him frankly that he didn't believe his story. He had never seen such water. We may by faith expect new experiences. *Credo quia absurdum* is a caricature, but it does point to the necessity of not letting our narrow human field of vision determine what we will believe. If we transcend our limited sensory capacity, we'll see what no eyes have seen, hear what no ears have heard, discover what no man has thought of, because God has prepared it for those who love Him (Is. 64:4; 1 Cor. 2:9).

Our salvation is beyond our natural experience. By faith we step to the foot of the Cross and to the open grave to receive what no human knowledge can give. We see more than a crucified and risen person. We see — a divine redemption from sin, death, and hell; a forgiveness that is above every ethical conception of our own; a life that is more wonderful than anything we could imagine. It is strange and marvelous that this atonement of Christ should reunite us sinful creatures with our holy Creator; it is a miracle that we should again be loved by Him.

Any human picture of what happened falls short of reality. Our condemnation and justification are court actions; but there is

a difference: The Judge and the accused are personally related. Sin broke an intimate fellowship; separating us from God, our Life, it doomed us to die. Jesus, bringing our pardon, mends the broken bond and brings the lost children back to their home; and by believing we resume our normal relation with God and live again as a happy family of sons and daughters with their Father.

"From now on you know Him and see Him" (John 14:7). If we were to limit our knowledge of God to what our senses can catch of Him, we would pull Him down from heaven into our little world and paint Him with anthropomorphisms or think of Him as a pale abstraction. But to us God is neither a bearded patriarch nor a concept; we know Him as a personal Being, revealed, and transcendent in glory. We cannot penetrate His nature as we would like to, our intelligence and imagination being what they are; but feeling the "pull" from behind the veil, we let God tell us who He is and what His thoughts are (1 Cor. 2:10-13); and we trust Him to give us the truth, like eaglets instinctively finding the right place under their mother's wing. "We live by trusting Him without seeing Him" (2 Cor. 5:7). "You never saw Him, yet you love Him; you do not see Him now, yet you believe in Him, and a joy unspeakable and glorious fills you with delight" (1 Peter 1:8).

We take His promise to be something real, and then God makes it real. "Faith is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of this faith is to see what we believe" (Augustine). God breaks into our earthly life so that we, transfigured by His wonderful love, lay hold of heaven here on earth. "I believe that I will see how good the Lord is in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13). Jesus said to Martha, "Didn't I tell you, 'If you believe, you will see the glory of God?'" (John 11:40.) "God, who said, 'Let light shine in the dark,' has shone in our hearts to spread the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

Jesus says, "God's bread is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

We say, "Lord, always give us that bread."

He says, "I am the Bread of life" (John 6:33-35).

"In Him was life" (John 1:4; cp. 8:12; Eph. 5:8). "I came that they may have life" (John 10:10; cp. 5:24; Rom. 1:16-17; Heb.

10:39; 1 Peter 1:3, 9; 1 John 5:13). "Do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you?" (2 Cor. 13:5; cp. Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:6.) "You live in God, and God lives in you" (1 John 4:16; Col. 3:3). "He is closer to us than we ourselves" (Augustine). From Him, "the Lord and Giver of life" (Acts 3:15), we have the life of God. "These are born, not of the blood of parents, or of the desire of the body, or of the desire of a man, but of God" (John 1:13; cp. James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23). This life, as of a branch in the vine, goes on when we are unconscious or even when in trouble we doubt that we believe. "Anyone who lives and believes in Me will never die" (John 11:26).

As we live in God, we have what He has, because He shares with us, and we experience His ever-present majesty and power. Jesus said, "Anything can be done if you believe" (Mark 9:23; cp. Matt. 8:13; 15:28). Paul says, "His power . . . is working mightily within me" (Col. 1:29). He "by the power that works in us can do far, far more than anything we ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20). "Every child of God conquers the world; our faith has triumphed over the world. Who conquers the world but he who believes Jesus is the Son of God!" (1 John 5:4-5.)

St. Louis, Mo.



### Outlines on Synodical Conference Epistles

#### THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

JAMES 1:2-12

Here is a wonderful thing — a way to take the trouble out of troubles! Eliphaz told Job, "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). Sparks still fly upward, and though our days be distant from Job's, we, too, are born unto trouble. This is for us!

"Life would be wonderful if it weren't for troubles," we say. Here St. James says: "When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends!" (Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches.*)

We must be different people to welcome troubles as friends. That's the beginning of the secret of

#### UNTROUBLING TROUBLE

##### *I. Jesus Christ Must Be Our Highest Good*

###### A. What this means

Like St. James, our brother, we must be "God's and the Lord Jesus Christ's slaves" (v.1). You must serve only those two masters, who with the Holy Ghost are our one God. He has redeemed you.

Now see

###### B. How this solves our trouble problems

Our style becomes Christ's style, our goal becomes the things of Christ, and the things that would "cramp our human style" no longer affect us. "Bad" things work for our good; things we don't get "will be added unto us" as we "seek the Kingdom." Like rainy weather — if you intended to go picnicking, it's trouble. If you want your grass seed to grow, it's a blessing.

Our thorns in the flesh become spurs for the soul, working out His perfect strength in our weakness. It is good to see a boy working out to build himself up into a man. It must make our Lord happy to see us sweating out our troubles with joy because we want to quit ourselves like men.

Let troubles come — in Christ we untrouble them, for each one will make us more perfect and entire, until, wanting nothing, our strength is made perfect and we are indeed men of God!

Do you feel that you lack something of what it takes?

## *II. God Must Give the Needed Wisdom*

He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask. It's His idea — He will not let us down.

This wisdom will be easy to take, too, from the Good Giver. We have taken the gift of Christmas, the offering of Good Friday, the victory of Easter, the power of Pentecost. "He gives generously to all men without making them feel foolish or guilty" (Phillips).

He gave us Christ — He will certainly give the needed strength to live the Christ life.

But make up your mind.

## *III. We Must Be Consistent in the Application of This Wisdom*

Don't be double-minded — saying you want to grow into a man of God while really you complain about your trials and want to be babied.

Be stable-minded — like the mind of Christ, who consented to be born in a stable and became obedient unto the death of the Cross that He might work the will of God for us. Rejoice, if you are poor, in your riches in Christ. Rejoice, if you are rich, in your humbling by God that precedes your exaltation.

But be consistent! If you want to quit yourself like a man, and you believe that God is the One who can make a man out of you, go to where He can be found — Word, Sacrament!

Kierkegaard tells the parable of a flock of geese that every seventh day came together in their pen to listen to an eloquent leader remind them of the goodness of God, who gave them wings



with which to fly. They thought it was wonderful. They really enjoyed the sermon. But "one thing they did not do. They did not fly; for the corn was good and the barnyard secure."

God wants to make of you a high-flying citizen of heaven! Will you be satisfied to complain about being born to trouble, or will you, like the sparks, fly upward? By the love of Christ in your life, by the wisdom of the Spirit in your living, by the consistent carrying out of your Christianity, untrouble trouble, and quit yourselves like men!

Silver Spring, Md.

GEORGE W. HOYER

#### FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ROM. 7:14-27

Text addressed to me as a Christian, as a forgiven sinner. In Christ I am sure of the forgiveness of all my sins (1 John 1:7). And yet I find myself yielding to sin daily. This sin in my life I want to overcome. But something within me keeps battling against that desire.

#### HOW CAN I WIN THE BATTLE THAT GOES ON WITHIN ME?

##### *I. By Recognizing Its Nature*

A. It is a *spiritual* battle between the two natures in me.

1. There are two natures in me, my regenerate nature and the old nature, my sinful flesh. At one time I had only the latter and could serve only sin (Rom. 6:20). Then I was dead in sin (Eph. 2:1). I could not believe in Christ (1 Cor. 2:14), nor did I want to (Rom. 8:7). I have become a child of God by His grace through Christ (Rom. 3:24). Now I have a new nature (2 Cor. 5:17). Yet I did not lose the old nature. I still have my flesh, and in that flesh dwells no good thing (v. 18).

2. These two natures are opposed to each other (Gal. 5:17). My spiritual nature recognizes the divine origin of the Law and its demands (v. 14), consents to the Law that it is good (v. 16), and delights in the Law of God (v. 22). According to the inner man I want to do the will of God (v. 18b) and avoid the things that displease Him. But my flesh works against these desires and efforts of my spirit. I fail to do the good that I want and commit

sins which I hate (vv. 15, 19). Good resolutions melt like ice in the sun, and sin pops up like a cork from under water. (Compare the experience of Peter, Matt. 26:30-35, 40-41, 69-75.) That is another nature working against my spirit, the sin power in me (v. 17, 20).

3. Since these two opposing natures are within the same body, and both of them are active, there must be a conflict.

B. It is a *real* battle.

1. Christ has conquered sin for me, and set me free (Rom. 6:17-23). My spirit is now king (Phil. 4:13). But the dispossessed usurper, the carnal nature in me, continues to war against me, seeking to establish himself again as ruler of my heart, endeavoring to make me again a slave of sin (v. 23). It is a fierce battle, for my carnal nature is sold under sin (v. 14b), and in it dwells not one good thing (v. 18a). That is why it is so difficult for me to overcome my indifference, control my temper, carry out good resolutions, etc.

2. This is not just an occasional lapse or exception to the rule. This is my daily experience. It is such a regular thing that it has the force of "a law" (v. 21). The Apostle would say: "This is the rule, that whenever I would do good, evil is always present with me."

C. Recognizing the nature of the battle will help me to win.

To win in any battle, we must know the foe, his method of attack, his field of operation, etc. So here.

## *II. By Trusting in Christ*

A. I cannot win in my own strength.

"With might of ours can naught be done," etc. When Paul cries out, "O wretched man," etc. (v. 24), he is not sinking into the slough of despair. He is expressing the utter futility of trusting in our own strength. The battle is fierce and long. The allies of my carnal nature are strong (Eph. 6:12).

B. With the help of Christ I can win (v. 25a).

In this battle I am not alone. Jesus Christ, my heaven-sent Savior, my Lord and the Lord of all who believe, is with me.

Paul is so sure of it that he breaks forth into a shout of victorious thanksgiving. Like Jacob, I will cling to Him, saying: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." He will answer: "As a prince thou hast power with God and with man and hast prevailed" (Gen. 32:26 ff.). With His help I can prevail in this battle that goes on within me (Rom. 8:31b).

Conclusion: The battle will go on as long as we live (v. 25b). Note that the Apostle speaks in the present tense of continuing action. Let us not give up the fight and lapse into spiritual death. Let us not go to sleep on the battlefield, "for the foe, well we know, oft his harvest reapeth while the Christian sleepeth." Let us in His strength courageously battle against the old nature within us. When the right time comes, God will give us the victor's eternal crown (Rev. 7:13-17).

Kansas City, Mo.

WM. GRAUMANN

#### FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

2 COR. 9:6-11

Paul uses the word "grace" some 100 times in his epistles. Usually he uses it in the sense of *favor Dei propter Christum*, the saving grace which covers all our sins. In fact, it is this unearned and undeserved grace of God in Christ Jesus which is the real source of all our gifts from God as Christians. However, Paul uses the same word "grace" a number of times to designate a fruit of this saving grace working in a Christian. He uses it in that sense in this text as he points to Christian giving as such a "grace." That puts this much-discussed phase of Christian living in its correct Biblical light. Giving which pleases God is actually a "grace" which He Himself bestows upon Christians.

It is a grace for which all Christians and all Christian congregations should seek and beg in honest prayer. So fitting for this Sunday.

(Here the standard Epistle, Gal. 5:25—6:10, and the standard Gospel, Matt. 6:24-34, might well be mentioned. Both of them emphasize by general statements what Paul applies in our text to a specific situation.)

### THE GRACE OF CHRISTIAN GIVING

#### *I. The Measure of This Grace in Us Shows Itself in Our Total Attitude Toward Giving*

(Here the background of this text should be presented. An offering was being lifted for the poverty-stricken Christians in Jerusalem. The Corinthians had requested directions, and Paul had given them (1 Cor. 16:2). Paul had boasted of the early interest and plans of the Corinthians to the Macedonians (1 Cor. 9:2). Macedonians had, however, overwhelmed Paul with their liberality (2 Cor. 8:1 ff.). Now he surely wanted the Corinthians to be ready when he comes, especially if any Macedonians would come with him (vv. 3-5). But because of conditions in Corinth, Paul uses a very tactful approach and lays down general principles of Christian giving which still apply today.)

##### A. We reap as we sow in giving.

1. Sparing sowing means scant harvest. No wise farmer is that foolish (Prov. 11:24).
2. Sowing bountifully, according to blessings received, brings a bountiful harvest (v. 6).
3. God is eager to shower as many blessings as we are ready to receive.

##### B. God measures our grace of giving by the attitude revealed in it.

1. Deliberately, with thoughtful purpose; not haphazardly (v. 7).
2. Cheerfully (really hilariously), counting it a joyful privilege and never a legalistic duty or compulsion (Prov. 22:9).

Illustration: How foolish and altogether contrary to God's standards was the giving of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 6:1-2) and of Ananias and Sapphira! (Acts 5:1-2.) How different the spirit of the widow (Mark 12:44) and Mary! (Mark 14:3.) Present-day examples can be added very easily.

#### *II. It Is God Alone Who Can Produce, Increase, and Bless This Grace in Us*

- ##### A. God is the Source of all grace, especially also the grace in Christ Jesus. (Here in very hearty words, the preacher

should show the matchless grace and liberality of God in giving us His only-begotten Son (2 Cor. 8:9; Titus 3:7; Rom. 3:24; 5:15).

1. By this grace God adds various graces of Christian living to all those who trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior (v.8).
  2. God is able and willing to grant to every Christian also the grace of Christian giving (v.8).
- B. All through the ages God has granted this grace to believers and blessed it (v.9).
1. Old Testament examples: Abraham, David (1 Chron. 29:9).
  2. Old Testament promises (Mal. 3:10; Ps. 112:9).
- C. Where this grace of Christian giving is produced and increased, many other blessings follow.
1. Bread for food. Today's Gospel (Matt. 6:33).
  2. Seed to sow. More money and goods to give away. Today's Epistle (Gal. 6:9-10).
  3. Fruits of righteousness (John 6:27; Rev. 14:13).
- D. God uses human needs and human instruments to let this grace prove itself (v. 11).

Conclusion: Hymn 441.

St. Joseph, Mich.

W. W. STUENKEL

## SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

### 1 JOHN 3:1-9

There are varying depths to the love of God. John 3:16 shows us one depth to this love of God, but Rom. 5:6-8, revealing that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," leads us into greater depths of that love. Ready to show us still greater depths of that love, St. John, in our text, invites us to

"BEHOLD WHAT MANNER OF LOVE THE FATHER  
HATH BESTOWED UPON US"

Speaking particularly of the love bestowed upon us Christians, John bids us note that

*I. Although It Does Not Yet Appear, We Are Already  
the Children of God and Shall Be Like Him*

The revised reading of v. 1 already brings us this astounding assurance. It not only calls attention to the manner of love, "that we should be called the sons [children] of God," but John adds by inspiration: "and we are!" This addition, found in old manuscripts not known to the translators of the King James Version, adds a punch that ought to stimulate our hearts. No longer need any Christian sing:

'Tis a point I long to know,  
Oft it causes anxious thought,  
Do I love my Lord or no?  
Am I His, or am I not?

John bids us say: "We are!"

Indeed, it doth not yet so appear (v. 2). We are still surrounded by the shadows of this dark world. Perhaps we ourselves are sick, afflicted, failing, dying; but "Beloved, *now* are we the children of God." NOW! We do not hope to become. We are *now*! God sees us now as we are going to be when He gets through with us (Eph. 5:27). "We shall be like Him" (Phil. 3:21). And it will all be real. "We shall see Him as He is." Do you sense the depth of this love? And do not hesitate to believe it, because you still see so much sin and wretchedness about you. Just listen as John leads you to still greater depths of that love and bids you note that,

*II. Although Sin Still Makes Us Stumble and Fall, God Through  
the Rebirth has Planted His Nature in Us So That We Cannot Sin  
(Cannot Will or Want to Sin)*

Had God, in Christ, done no more than pay for our sin and guilt, we would still have remained limp and impotent in our sinful natures (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7). So God's love went farther. In bringing us to faith, God planted a new life, a new incentive, a new nature in us, which takes up a battle with the old nature (Rom. 7:22-23). This new nature cannot sin. Each verse in our text from vv. 3-10 explains this purifying process that goes on in the reborn.



Behold, then, the manner of love bestowed upon you! As a Christian you, too, feel this new incentive, this new life within you, which does not want to sin. You, too, can then say with Paul (Rom. 7:20): "If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." With the same force John assures us in v. 7: "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." This is the manner of the Father's love. He has planted a living evidence within us that we are His children (v. 10).

Answer, then, this manner of the Father's love, and sing Hymn 397:1:

O Love, who madest me to wear  
The image of Thy Godhead here; . . .  
O Love, I give myself to Thee,  
Thine ever, only Thine, to be.

(NOTE: If any would emphasize the powerful exhortations to sanctification in vv. 3-10, let him choose a different theme and approach and not spoil John's purpose in revealing the manner of God's love.)

Tacoma, Wash.

A. W. SCHELP

## BRIEF STUDIES

### "HE" OR "SHE" IN RUTH 3:15b?

In the history of the English Bible, Ruth 3:15 stands out as an interesting passage involving a curious error.

Baikie (*English Bible*, ch. 22) draws our attention to the fact that the first edition of the King James Version is often known as the Great He Bible, while the second is called the Great She Bible. The reason for these curious nicknames is that in the passage Ruth 3:15, the first edition reads, quite correctly, "and *he* went into the citie," while the second, and nearly all subsequent editions read, "and she went into the citie." You will find that your own Bibles in this respect are "she" Bibles; but the true reading has been restored in the Revised Version, though a footnote is added stating that some ancient authorities read "she" (Vulg. and Syr.). In his *Biblia Hebraica* Kittel notes in the critical apparatus that there are 54 manuscripts which belong to the "she" class. But in view of the huge number of "he" texts these few variant readings have little weight, especially since the "she" reading is the easy one and could readily owe its origin to a scribal error.

However, David Daiches in *The King James Version of the Bible, an Account of the Development and Sources of the English Bible of 1611 with Special Reference to the Hebrew Tradition*, University of Chicago Press 1941, states: "There are various bibliographical problems connected with the first issue of the Authorized Version. Two separate issues, each bearing the date 1611, differ from each other in many small details. Of these differences the best known are the two readings in Ruth 3:15, where one issue reads, 'he went into the city,' the other reading *correctly*, 'she went into the city.'" (P. 74. Italics our own.) In response to our inquiry Mr. Daiches, who is at present living in his native England, replied: "The 'he' 'she' business in Ruth 3:15 is interesting and a bit confusing. You are quite right in saying that the Hebrew text as we have it reads, 'and he went into the city.' Yet the sense seems to require 'she.' After all, it is Ruth and not Boaz who (apparently) went into the city. For note how verse 16—the immediately following verse—begins: 'And when she came to her mother-in-law. . . .' And the Hebrew there is וַתָּבוֹא, although, as you point out, it is וַיָּבֹא in verse 15.—There is no doubt that 'he' is right as a rendering of the Hebrew text, and if I were writing my

book today, I would go into the matter at greater length and explain the position more clearly. But, though 'he' does translate the Hebrew text, it remains puzzling. The Midrash, puzzled by the 'he,' seeks to solve the problem by explaining that Boaz accompanied Ruth to the city gate, lest she be molested. If that is meant, it is certainly an odd way of putting it."

We prefer not only to let the Hebrew text stand, but also to translate it exactly as it reads: "and he went into the city." There is no real difficulty involved. It is simply a plain statement of fact, telling us where Boaz went. Verse 16 tells us where Ruth went. If this story were recast into the form of a drama, the stage directions at this point might read: "Exit Boaz, to the city," and "Exit Ruth, to her mother-in-law."

Pitcairn, Pa.

LUTHER POELLOT

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

JOHN DEWEY 1859—1952

John Dewey's death at ninety-two ended the career of one of the most influential philosophers and teachers on the scene of modern American thought. His sixty-five years of teaching began after his graduation from Johns Hopkins, where, as a student of philosophy, he had become acquainted with Hegel's ideas which "operated as an immense release" from the American philosophy with which he had been previously acquainted. He served as professor of philosophy at the universities of Michigan, Minnesota, and Chicago before he came to Columbia Teachers College in 1904. By this time he had formulated his basic ideas, which have so taken hold that they have been identified in the minds of many as representing the American philosophy of education.

Dewey was regarded as the foremost representative of experimental naturalism. As a naturalist he denied the supernatural and classified man as identical in kind with animals although differing in degree; as an experimentalist he contended that experience alone determined whether something was true or not. He rejected all foregone conclusions or goals and vehemently denied that philosophy or religion could be based on eternal verities. In fact, said Dewey, there was no such thing as truth until it had been verified by experience. Up to that time "truth" was only an idea yet to be demonstrated. Thus the seat of authority was not in God or in any revelation, but in man. Even man could not be an authority to hand down universal truths, for every proposed "truth" had to be verified to satisfy the needs of the problem in the solution of which it arose. Hence truth was not something to be discovered by man, but something which he made through a scientific experiment. Applying his theory to morality, Dewey naturally could not find his sanctions in religion, but in the consequences of decisions put into operation. "The experimental logic when carried into morals makes every quality that is judged to be good according as it contributes to amelioration of existing ills."

He regarded education as a process of living and not a preparation for future living. Hence, according to Dewey, education must be closely related to the social scene in which the child lives rather than in some future situation which may never be realized in a changing society. Because of his emphasis on naturalism he regarded education primarily as growth. Since he was an experimentalist who relied

on experiences and rejected eternal values, he did not answer the question "growth for what?" Herein he exposed himself to his severest critics. While it can hardly be said that his influence is waning in the classrooms of America, his critics are becoming more numerous along the frontiers of educational thought.

Even though John Dewey's philosophy was basically unacceptable for a Lutheran education, it would be blindness if one did not see some of his influences in our own areas. His insistence that education was a process of living in the present has had its effect on the curriculum by making it more fluid and relevant to the life of the child around him. The realization that all the experiences of the pupil in the classroom under the direction of the teacher are a part of the child's curriculum has made many of our Lutheran educators realize more fully that learning takes place also away from books and blackboards. The greater emphasis on pupil activity and on the understanding of the child's interests are some of the emphases that have been sifted out of Dewey's philosophy. Only the coming decades will show just how much of the impact of Dewey's philosophy of education has been felt in Lutheran schools without having accepted his man-enthroned interpretation of life.

ARTHUR C. REPP

#### FANATICISM FLARES IN SPAIN

Under this heading, *Christian Life* (May, 1952) reports that the "Roman Catholic hierarchy has officially declared an all-out war to halt the further spread of Protestantism." In a pastoral letter Pedro Cardinal Segura Saenz, archbishop of Seville, who is an outspoken foe of anything approaching religious freedom in Spain, declared, among other things: "Protestant proselytism, having broken the dikes of tolerance, is not hesitating to advance on the open field toward religious freedom in our country. They are doing their utmost to convert Spain into a land for their missionary work and are threatening Spain's religious unity. Through large-scale propaganda they are compelling Catholics to protect themselves by demanding that the Law be strictly respected to benefit internal peace." The "Law" to which the cardinal has reference is the "Charter of the Spanish People" of July 17, 1945, which makes Romanism the official religion of Spain and as such gives it official protection. This "charter" is now being used for "propaganda efforts" against evangelical mission endeavors. The religious minority of Protestants in Spain numbers about 20,000 members. By the existing law they are forbidden to evangelize, operate schools, publish literature, and perform marriages that are legal. It is believed that the cardinal's

ire was aroused especially by the book *Why I Left Catholicism*, published by Senor Don Luis Padrosa, a converted ex-Jesuit priest, and distributed by the "Spanish Christian Mission." Despite the threat of excommunication, Roman Catholics have been reading the book avidly. Many, including nuns and priests, have been converted and have left the Roman Church.

In connection with the cardinal's fulmination, a band of about twenty young men, some wearing Catholic Action buttons, burst into the Spanish Reformed chapel of San Basilio as the pastor, Dr. Santos Molinos, was leading children of his congregation in choir practice. They broke down the street door of the building and invaded the chapel. Crying "Down with Protestantism," they poured gasoline on Bibles, hymnals, and pews and then ignited them. When the pastor attempted to stop them, he was slugged and knocked to the ground. After the intruders had fled, choir members put out the fire before extensive damage was done. Since British property was involved, the British government has filed a formal protest against the attack on the Seville chapel. When the minister had verified the facts of the attack, Christian evangelicals sent a protest to Generalissimo Franco and a wire to Washington, D. C., urging President Truman to halt aid to Spain until religious liberty for Protestants in Spain is assured. J. T. MUELLER

"THAT ALL MAY BE ONE"

Under this heading the *Catholic Mind* (April, 1952) quotes an editorial that first appeared in *The Record* (Louisville, Ky., Jan. 5, 1952), approving what is there said of a possible union between Catholics and Protestants. Such a supra-divisional, unsectarian sort of religion, in which certain elements of both faiths would be retained and others discarded, the article holds, would be to both Catholics and Protestants alike a purely imaginary and fanciful solution. It declares:

"There can be no super-church. Although there is, theoretically, nothing to prevent the formation of a world-government according to the democratic process, a world-church created by the consensus of the people is not even theoretically possible. Such a thing would never be acceptable to the Christians who believe that Christ Himself is the Creator and sole Originator of the true religion. In the viewpoint of these people the world-church already exists and has existed since the crucifixion, and the Church which Christ founded was truly eschatological, destined to embrace not only all peoples, but all times as well. . . . If unity is to be achieved among Christian denominations, it cannot be gained within this vague and cloudy atmosphere of multiple denominations each claiming to represent and to embody



a legitimate interpretation of the message of Christ. Here unity is impossible."

But much less does the union of Catholics and Protestants appear possible to Catholics who regard their own Church as the exclusively valid representative of Christ on earth. "There is not a Catholic under the sun who is not imbued with the consciousness that his Church is the true Church of Christ. In fact, there has never been a time, before or after the Reformation, when the Catholic Church did not possess this self-consciousness. Nor can any thinking Protestant indulge the hope that this exclusiveness will ever cease to be an essential characteristic of the Roman Church, for as time goes on it becomes not less, but more evident. If therefore there can be no super-church and there is no consciousness on the part of any single Protestant sect of being the sole true religion, how can unity among Christians ever be effected except by a return of all Protestants to the Catholic fold? There is no other road to unity, no other realistic solution, no other answer."

The article then appeals to Protestants to give Catholics the benefit of the doubt and accept their sincerity, to cease to look upon the abuses in the Catholic Church and consider its essential holiness and surpassing strength and to realize that the love of Catholics for Christ is more intimate, compelling, and more self-sacrificing than is their own, in order that they might discuss "the reunion of all Christians in the Faith of Christ," that is, the return of Protestants to Romanism.

But Catholics "must be willing to concede the great good that is to be found among Protestants, the virtues that come to light among them, especially the immense trust and confidence they have in the Lord, and the singularly, almost miraculously clean lives which so many of them lead."—"And we know," so reads the closing sentence, "that while we are secure in our faith, they sometimes outstrip us in good works and are a reproach [reproof] to us."

J. T. MUELLER

#### BIBLICAL NEWS

In this department of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (April, 1952) we find a number of news items of general interest. During the last Catholic Bible Week, headquarters in Washington sent out 35,000 packets, containing sermon outlines, posters, and a booklet on the Bible to Catholic pastors, principals of Catholic elementary and high schools, Catholic reading rooms, Catholic information centers, and the like, to remind both Catholics and non-Catholics of the teachings of the Church on the right use of Sacred Scripture. Over 400,000 requests for the free booklet came to the Washington headquarters. Radio and

television stations carried special programs to encourage a better reading of the Bible. Catholic newspapers and periodicals gave much publicity to the observance of the Bible Week.

Father Gabriel Allegra, O. F. M., with the assistance of four helpers at the Franciscan "Biblical School of Peiping," is preparing a new translation of the whole Bible into Chinese from the original languages. The whole Bible, consisting of seven volumes, is to be completed within seven years.

Père Poidebard, S. J., has been decorated with the Aeronautics Medal by the French government, for having mapped during the past twenty-five years ancient sites buried beneath the sand, such as the harbors of Sidon, Tyre, Carthage, of Gemellae in northern Africa and of the province of Numidia, as also the complicated net of aqueducts built by the Romans in the deserts of the Middle East and northern Africa.

The Christians of southern India are planning to celebrate the nineteenth centennial of the arrival of St. Thomas in southern India. The date has been tentatively set for December of this year. According to Indian tradition, the Apostle arrived at Cranganore, an ancient seaport of the east coast of southern India, where he preached the Gospel and established congregations. The Apostle Thomas is said to have converted King Gundaphar, who then reigned in southern India. Coins bearing the name of this king have been found. Thomas is believed to have been buried in Mailapur. The celebration is to impress non-Christians with the fact that Christianity is an ancient and not a new religion, rooted in Indian soil for about 1900 years.

In the Kaleishin Mountain pass, 10,000 feet above sea level, in the border zone between Iran and Iraq, has been found a stone monument, seven feet high, eighteen inches thick, and two feet wide. On July 6, 1951, perfect molds were made of its southern Assyrian and its northern Urartian inscriptions. It is hoped that this stone monument will perform the same service for Urartian as the Rosetta Stone did for Egyptian hieroglyphs. Urartian is an ancient language of the Near East which so far has not been deciphered. Urartu is the Biblical Ararat. The Assyrian inscription declares that Ispuinis, king of Urartu, ca. 900 B. C., defied the might of the Assyrian empire.

Robert E. Braidwood of the University of Chicago has discovered in Iraq what is regarded as the world's oldest village, named Jarmo, just outside modern Kirkuk. Ancient Jarmo, dating back to 5000 B. C., had no walls. Its citizens made only feeble flint arrowheads for hunting small game. Its 20 by 20-foot mud houses consisted each of three rooms, with a small courtyard. But one of the houses was considerably

larger and contained six rooms and a corridor. Agricultural instruments were crude, but the ancient Jarmians raised barley, two kinds of wheat, and a legume thought to be peas. Figurines of nude and pregnant women suggest the practice of a fertility cult. No other idols or magic symbols were found.

J. T. MUELLER

#### BULTMANN'S NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

It might perhaps be of help to pastors, who are so very busy with practical work that they cannot devote much attention to scientific theological studies, to consider Professor R. Bultmann's approach to the New Testament in the light of the following sentences. Bultmann does not regard the Gospels true in their traditional historical sense, but as legendary developments which must be demythologized in order that the scholar may arrive at the kernel of truth which they contain. Bultmann's theory is set forth in his *Theology of the New Testament*. (Translated from the German by Kendrick Grobel and published by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951. IX & 366 pages. \$3.50). A very good review of it appears in the *Journal of Bible and Religion* (April, 1952) by L. Harold DeWolf of Boston University (pp. 104-106). Omitting what does not serve our purpose, we quote Dr. DeWolf's restatement of Professor Bultmann's views of Jesus as follows:

"Bultmann denies that Jesus possessed a messianic consciousness and interprets the tradition of the 'Messiah-secret' in Mark as an effort of the earliest church to explain the lack of any public teaching of his messiahship from the lips of Jesus. To maintain this view he divides the 'Son-of-Man' sayings into different classes and contends that the only ones which actually came from Jesus and which are messianic in meaning referred not to him, but to another who was yet to come. The earliest church made one great change in Jesus' teaching, Bultmann believes, a change already evident in the synoptic tradition. That change was to regard Jesus himself as the coming Messiah. It is insisted, however, that the earliest church did not for a moment suppose that Jesus in his early life, nor even as risen from the dead, had been the Messiah, but rather that on his return as Son of Man he was to be the Messiah. The earliest church is regarded, then, as the 'eschatological congregation' not primarily concerned with memorializing the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, nor with seeking his mystical presence, but rather intently awaiting his early inauguration of God's reign and preparing for it by obedience to 'his, the coming king's words' (47). The Christian message is said to have been mediated to Paul by the Hellenistic rather than by the earliest Judaic church. Hence Bultmann turns his attention next to the pre-Pauline Hellenistic Christians.

Their preaching to the Gentiles had to begin with proclaiming the one true God and the future resurrection of the dead. A new stop occurred in the interpretation of Jesus, for he was preached as having been already announced as Savior and Judge by God's raising of him from the dead. He was therefore already the heavenly King. Under Gnostic influence, moreover, the salvation of men was given a cosmological meaning and Christ became thought of as 'the pre-existent divine being, Son of the Father' (175)."

In his criticism of Bultmann Professor DeWolf writes: "There are many points at which this reviewer remains unconvinced. The jacket announces that Bultmann 'tells what the scriptures themselves say; he avoids the common fault of bending them to support some particular point of view.' That seems hardly accurate in view of the ease with which he dismisses passages as too late for consideration in interpreting the thought of a given period, avowedly on the sole ground that they do not fit his conception of what was taught at that time, and also in view of the objectively implausible interpretations given to other passages which seem to contradict his views. Especially dubious seems his insistence that there is not 'a single saying of Jesus' to substantiate the view that 'Jesus saw the presence of God's Reign in his own person and in the followers who gathered about him' (22), and his assurance that concerning Jesus' earthly life 'Paul is interested only in the *fact* that Jesus became a man and lived on earth . . . that Jesus was a definite, concrete man, a Jew' and 'beyond that, Jesus' manner of life, his ministry, his personality, his character play no roll at all; neither does Jesus' message'" (293-294). The conservative Christian student of the Bible appreciates the repudiation of Bultmann's radically liberal views.

J. T. MUELLER

#### THE BIBLE AS "THE WORD OF GOD"

This is the heading of the last chapter of a book by Dr. C. H. Dodd, emeritus professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, entitled *The Authority of the Bible*.<sup>\*</sup> It is one in a series of volumes constituting the "Library of Constructive Theology." Professor Dodd's book has been widely read. It appeared first in 1928, was revised and reprinted in 1938, and was published in reprints in 1941, 1942, 1944, 1947, 1948, and again in 1952. This shows that there is a great demand for a theological treatise with a constructive theology for liberals. Liberalism does not accept the traditional theology of orthodox Chris-

<sup>\*</sup>*The Authority of the Bible*. By C. H. Dodd. London: Nisbeth & Co. LTD. 310 pages, 9×6. \$3.15.

tianity: on the other hand, it cannot get along without the Bible. It therefore recasts the ancient theological expression and categories and supplies them with a new meaning and use. So did Dr. H. E. Fosdick some years ago in our country, and so does Dr. C. H. Dodd (not to mention others) in England today.

Liberals, then, ascribe to the Bible authority: in other words, also liberals desire to make use of the Bible as "the Word of God." However, as Dr. Dodd holds, "nowhere is the truth given in such purely 'objective' form that we can find a self-subsistent external authority. Even where it might appear that, if Christian belief is true, we should have such absolute authority, namely, in the words of Jesus Christ, we have been forced to conclude that we must still accept responsibility for our judgments. For the report of His teaching is not inerrant" (p. 290). Since therefore the Scriptures cannot be trusted as a source of objective truth, the "subjective factor," according to the writer, becomes important. Professor Dodd grants that religious authority somehow resides in the Bible, but faces the reader with the question: "How does it become authoritative *to me?*"

Starting out from the idea that the crown of Biblical revelation is the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, he states that Jesus never told men anything about God but what they could see for themselves when He had brought them into the right attitude for seeing Him (p. 291). Jesus released men from falsehoods and perversions of affections and will, which obscured their view of God, and then they began to know God. St. Paul thus found through contact with Jesus a new center from which to contemplate life and the world (p. 292). And "looking from that new center he found that God revealed Himself in all experience in new surprising ways." A similar experience is found in St. John. "The divine authority of Christ is inferred [by John] from His power to enable men to see God" (p. 293). But even to see God in Christ, Dr. Dodd contends, is not the first step in the Christian revelation. For anyone who has not first accepted Christ's attitude to life, this is a "colossal assumption" (p. 293). Only "when we accept His way, then we come into a position in which we can begin to see the truth of God in our own experience as interpreted by what He said and what He was" (p. 294).

Here therefore we have the way in which the Bible becomes an authority to men. "For those who approach the Bible in this spirit [with a "new attitude to God and to life"] . . . it is capable of awakening and redirecting the powers of mind, heart and will, so that a man's whole attitude and relation to the last realities is shaped anew. It can

do this because it is the sincere utterance of men who were themselves mightily certain of God in their own experience, individual and corporate. . . . They write out of their experience of God in the soul, or of God's dealings in what happened to them and their people. It profits us as we 'live ourselves into it' (p. 295).

At this point we ask: Does not perhaps the writer endeavor to express in new terms and forms what the Church has always said of the living divine Word as the means of grace, or of the *Deus loquens* in Scripture? So it may seem. Unlike the orthodox teachers, however, Dr. Dodd does not believe the Scriptures to be divinely inspired. Nor does he believe that faith in Christ is mediated through the divine Word by the Holy Spirit and, with faith, spiritual understanding and whatever else the believer receives by faith. His view of how a person gains a "new attitude to God and to life" is manifestly Pelagian: "The criterion lies within ourselves, in the response of our own spirit to the Spirit that utters itself in the Scriptures" (p. 296). But whether or not this "Spirit" is the Holy Spirit in the sense of the Christian Church is very doubtful. Not to mention other things, he translates John 16:13 thus: "However, when He comes, who is the Breath of the Truth, He will lead you into the whole truth." Again, to Dr. Dodd the Bible is not the final revelation as it is to orthodox believers. He writes: "If the Bible is indeed 'the Word of God,' it is so not as the 'last word' on all religious questions, but as the 'seminal word,' out of which fresh apprehension of truth springs in the mind of man" (p. 300).

But how, then, does the Bible, according to the writer, affect men as "the Word of God"? For explanation he points to the great dramatists who, having experienced life in terms of the suffering that besets it and the spirit that triumphs over the suffering, they convey to their auditors or readers the same experiences, thereby making them greater men. "It is here," the author declares, "that we find the best analogy to that which the reading of the Bible should do for us. Its writers are men who had an experience of life both deep and intense. They felt with sincerity and express what they felt with strong conviction. As we identify ourselves with them in our reading, we too may come to a deeper and more intense experience of life. And as God touches us in all great literature . . . , so He touches us supremely in the literature of the Bible" (p. 296).

Liberalism approaches the thinking student of Scripture with the promise that it has something to offer that is more acceptable than the old-fashioned theology of Christianity. But has it? We leave it to the reader to judge after he has considered thoughtfully the liberal views here presented.

J. T. MUELLER



## ANOTHER WORK OF SUPEREROGATION

On October 29, 1951, Pope Pius XII addressed the Italian Catholic Union of Midwives on "Rhythm in Marriage." The Pope's declaration seems to impose new and additional burdens on the consciences of his subjects. At the same time the Romanist teachers in moral theology will have to find a solution to a new problem in the field of morals; more specifically, they will have to answer the troubled Romanist under which conditions and for what length of time the practice of rhythm is a venial sin and when it becomes a mortal sin. In *America* of May 3, 1952, Gerald Kelly, S. J., professor of moral theology at St. Mary's College, Kansas, offers a solution to this moral problem which, as it seems to us, is fully in accord with Roman theology and which meets the earnest longing of the devout Roman layman. The solution seems to lie in the Roman distinction between commandments and "evangelical counsels," between works of obligation and works of supererogation. Every Romanist is obligated to observe the five commandments of the Church, but not the "evangelical counsels." The "Gospel" is said to prescribe such works as were never intended for all, especially the three "counsels" of chastity, poverty, and obedience, "counsels" which could be met only by the "religious." In the course of time the Church, however, expanded the concept of these works so that also the laity could perform works of supererogation. The layman, like the "religious," may perform works not commanded. When a seminarian enters a religious order, or a nun enters the convent, he or she is going beyond the call of duty. Likewise in the performance of the marital works a husband and wife can go beyond the actual call of duty. Applying this principle to the recent pronouncement of the Pope, the professor of moral theology suggests a solution which is based on a hypothetical case of a relatively young couple blessed with eight children and also with a dozen more fertile years. May they practice rhythm and thus actually practice birth control, which is, of course, forbidden? The answer runs about as follows: In raising a family of eight they have fulfilled their duty, and the practice of rhythm is neither a venial nor a mortal sin. Of course, the moralist admits that it is somewhat difficult to establish the number of children which are required for the fulfillment of one's duty. In his article he lists such writers as Dr. Messner, *Social Ethics*, who fixes the minimum of children for the perpetuation of our nation at the average of three or four. Similarly, E. C. Messenger, *Two in One Flesh*, believes that each fertile couple should have at least four children. This would imply that after a couple has "done its duty"

it may practice rhythm, provided, of course, that both are agreed to this practice and that no harm will come to either. Whatever the final answer will be as to the number of children a couple must have before it has fulfilled its duty, the Roman moralist will operate on the principle that there is a limit as to what the Church will obligate its members to do, say, to raise a family of four, but that there is no limit as to what Christian idealism will strive for—say, a family of fifteen. Some would have us believe that Rome's theology is in a constant flux to meet the changing conditions. In a certain sense this is true. But the basic principles of moral theology are fixed. There remains the basic distinction between "commandments of the Church," whose transgression is a mortal sin, and the "evangelical counsels" prescribed in the Gospel, whose observance is a work of supererogation and therefore worthy of an extra reward.

F. E. M.

#### A MORE OBJECTIVE VIEW OF A GREAT MISSIONARY

Last year there were published in London, under the title *Apprenticeship at Kuruman* (ed. by I. Schapera. Illustrated. Map. Central African Archives, Oppenheimer Series, No. 5. London: Chatto and Windus. 30s. 1951), the "journals and letters of Robert and Mary Moffat, 1820—1829." As it seems, these journals and letters give the reader a more objective and complete view of Robert Moffat and his brave missionary wife than is commonly found even in more detailed and critical biographies of this great missionary, in which often his life and work are somewhat idealized. The thorough and apparently objective review of the book by Prof. E. A. Walker of St. John's College, Cambridge, is published in the *International Review of Missions* (April, 1952). While frequently the tremendous difficulties facing this outstanding pioneer missionary in South Africa are more or less minimized or left unmentioned, they are frankly and fully presented in Moffat's journals and letters. The publication thus becomes a valuable document for the early mission history of Africa. Robert Moffat was sent to South Africa by the London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) in 1816. He arrived at Capetown in January, 1817, but was not permitted by the Cape government to go to his chosen field in Namaqualand. Later he worked among the followers of Jager (Christian) Afrikaner, a reformed freebooter. Together with John Campbell and Dr. John Philip he afterwards undertook an official visit of the L.M.S. stations. Then he married Mary Smith in Capetown and settled somewhat permanently with her at the recently founded station of New Lithakao (Maruping) on the Kuruman River

in May, 1821. The reviewer writes of Moffat, among other things: "Moffat seems to have been almost contemptuous of native doings and ideas [Bantu culture and cultus]. To him 'the heathen' were simply souls to be saved and not human beings with lives of their own. Long years after, he could write that he had never tried to give an account of Bechuana manners and customs, for it would have been a lengthy business with little instructive or 'edifying' at the end of it all. So fully did he share the views of many early missionaries that these things were merely 'ye beastlie devices of ye heathen' that he went near to denying his people any religion whatever; certainly, he never understood their elaborate cult, with its everyday basis in magic and ancestor-worship and its culmination in the dim and distant *Modimo*, creator of all things and molder of destiny."

Concerning Moffat's personality Professor Walker writes: "Moffat told much of the field in which he labored and most, probably unconsciously, about himself. He was undoubtedly stiff in opinions, often in the wrong, and not overburdened with Christian charity. He had little good to say of his fellow workers, even of the Wesleyans; and of the leaders of his own society he disliked Campbell, if only for his interference in the internal affairs of the Griquas and his too frequent recourse to the bottle; and he did not see eye to eye with Philip [Dr. John Philip, an L. M. S. superintendent] from the first. Forgetting, as no good Presbyterian should have done, that John Knox himself had wanted to saddle his Kirk with superintendents, he giped at the Doctor's (Philip) superintendence; and holding as he did that a missionary's sole business was conversion, he disapproved of Philip's 'political' activities in the Cape Colony and London and his championing the cause of the non-Europeans. He took a less rosy view of the Griquas than did the Doctor; and when he had seen at close quarters his dealings with that people, he took the gloves off. It is only fair to add that his bitterness was surpassed by that of his wife. Doubtless, there were faults on both sides as between obstinate Lowland Scots; but if Philip can justly claim that he won for the Cape Colored folk the higher legal status of which they have been robbed in our own day, Moffat can claim to have been the first educated European to learn the Bechuana language and to have reduced it to writing at the cost of many lonely months of trekking among them and their dirt, lice, smell, thieving, beggary, and ceaseless chatter, and to have been the man who laid the foundations of Christianity in their country. It was fitting that his eldest daughter, Mary, should one day have married David Livingstone and have died the wife of a missionary-

explorer far up-country." These minor faults of Moffat do not disparage his great merits as a missionary. While men like Campbell and Philip, once very influential, are now as good as forgotten, Robert and Mary Moffat wear their halos in ever greater glory as writers present them as heroes of mission enterprise in popular and scientific mission books. Still, it is good to scrutinize them a little more closely and to see their faults and difficulties, their hates and their loves, their virtues and their prejudices, and to find them as human as are our present-day missionaries, who often receive too little credit for their toils and sacrifices. The question: *Cur alii, alii non?* faces us also in mission history.

J. T. MUELLER

#### A SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON COMMUNISM

According to the *Congressional Record—Appendix* (A2749, 1952), the American Legion recently engaged the services of 25 experts to select from the vast number of publications on Communism those titles which, in the opinion of these experts, "are basic or elementary reading for those who know little or have read nothing about the whole complex problem of world communism in its many aspects and the threat it presents to America today." Though Dr. Alfred Rehwinkel a few years ago contributed a study on Communism under the title *Communism and the Church*, there may be those who would like to study additional investigations. We are, therefore, submitting author, title, publisher, and price of the publications recommended by the American Legion:

Weissberg, *The Accused*, Simon & Schuster (\$4.00)

Hunter, *Brain Washing in Red China*, Vanguard (\$3.50)

Lowry, *Communism and Christ*, Morehouse-Gorham (\$2.50)

Lipper, *Eleven Years in Soviet Prison Camps*, Henry Regnery Co. (\$3.50)

Colonel Kintner, *The Front Is Everywhere*, University of Oklahoma Press (\$3.50)

Bentley, *Out of Bondage*, Devin-Adair (\$3.50)

Walsh, *Total Empire*, Bruce Publishing Co. (\$3.50)

Toledano and Lasky, *Seeds of Treason*, Funk & Wagnalls (\$3.50)

General Willoughby, *Shanghai Conspiracy*, Dutton (\$3.75)

Chambers, *Witness*, Random House (\$5.00)

Flynn, *While You Slept*, Devin-Adair (\$2.50)

Orwell, 1984, Signet (35 cents)

## BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The General Conference of the Methodist Church, meeting in San Francisco, rejected a proposal to give full clergy rights to women. . . . Women now "supply" a few churches, but hold lay status.

\* \* \*

Nineteen Protestant ministers and the Franklin (Pa.) Ministerial Association, of which they are members, a year ago made charges in a petition filed in Venango County Court that county and city officials were engaged in a "criminal conspiracy" to permit the illegal operation of slot machines and other gambling devices. Thereupon Police Chief F. M. Sheffer brought a \$100,000 libel and slander suit against them. County Judge Lee A. McCracken called a special grand jury to investigate the charges. The ministers then requested that the Judge dismiss the grand jury, conceding that they had no evidence to support the conspiracy charges; filing of the original petition had been prompted by widespread discussions occasioned by the Kefauver Senate Crime Committee investigations. The Police Chief also withdrew his libel suit. — A warning against hysteria apt to be caused by the present wave of accusations and investigations.

\* \* \*

Three fourths of the war prisoners in Korea "manifest an interest in learning something about Christianity and the Bible," said (Chaplain Major General) Ivan L. Bennett, newly appointed Army Chief of Chaplains. He reported to the 136th annual meeting of the American Bible Society that there is a "great demand" for the Scriptures by the armed forces of the Republic of Korea and by the civilian population as well. "Anyone close to the situation must agree that it portends a tremendous potential for the future of Christianity in Korea. And the men who will lead Korea tomorrow are reading the Bible today."

\* \* \*

A revision of a Finnish Lutheran Church law approved by the Council of Bishops meeting in Helsinki brought to general attention an extraordinary stipulation of that law: Everyone over 40 years of age has traditionally been entitled to two votes in ecclesiastical elections and an additional vote if married more than ten years. The proposed reform would provide equal suffrage, one vote for each person. . . . The revision was opposed by some bishops who contended that age and experience should be taken into account in religious matters.

Discussions begun in 1932, suspended in 1934, and renewed in 1950 have led to an endorsement of conditional pulpit friendship between the Church of England and the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland. Two resolutions were adopted by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, one saying that "duly accredited ministers of the Church of Scotland may be permitted by a bishop to preach in an Anglican church at services other than Holy Communion," the other saying that ministers of the Church of England may similarly accept invitations to preach in churches of the Church of Scotland if they have the approval of the appropriate bishop of the Episcopal Church in Scotland.

\* \* \*

British church organizations are beset by financial troubles that have been brewing for some time and are now coming to a head. Drastic staff cuts are recommended as a way out. The Congregational Union of England and Wales and the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland report the disappearance of reserves and increased deficits. The British and Foreign Bible Society is in only a slightly better position; though it reported a surplus of 11,000 pounds in 1951, it was stated at the same time that an accumulated reserve of 500,000 pounds had been exhausted by the continued deficits in the years 1946—50.

\* \* \*

Twelve men serving on a jury at a murder trial in Hull, Quebec, asked whether a priest could be made available to hear their confessions; they wished to go to Communion in a body on Sunday. Judge Francis Caron of Montreal granted the request — with some hesitation; there could be some objections he thought. While the priest could hear confessions, he had no right to direct a juror on the verdict he should deliver; the case must not be discussed in the confessional.

\* \* \*

Rescue Mission assistance to the homeless and friendless in the United States and Canada reached a new high last year. George L. Bolton, president of the International Union of Gospel Missions, reported that more than five-and-a-half million persons received overnight lodgings and over 10 million meals were served in the 229 missions, with 23,000 beds available each night. . . . More of the missions are extending their activities to women and children, and more of them are entering industrial work, not only to finance their activities, but to provide employment for men who come to the missions for help. The Rescue Mission of Trenton, N. J., has in that way



become self-supporting. This mission alone cares for nearly 40,000 men annually. . . . Skid Row, Mr. Bolton said, is still claiming untold thousands of men each year; and the only answer to Skid Row is renewed evangelism. "By evangelism we don't mean merely a series of meetings or the shouting of catchy slogans or the visit of a particular missionary. I believe evangelism means the close and intimate personal approach that gets right down to a sinner's need, that shows him what conversion, righteousness, and self-victory mean. It means praying with him and exercising a measure of God's love as well as talking about it. We must go to the people. We must outdo the Communist in his constant eagerness to make new followers." — To the student of history it appears as though, despite much-boasted advances, conditions in the world are not too far removed from those in the late Middle Ages, as to both the obvious gap between the very rich and the very poor and the enemy who lies in wait for the victims of conditions — also the true remedy if the evangelism applied is of the right kind.

\* \* \*

Girard College in Philadelphia, a wealthy and highly accredited academic and vocational school for poor fatherless boys, dates back to the will of Stephen Girard, Philadelphia's mariner prince, who in 1847 left his huge fortune to found the school, decreeing that no clergymen should be permitted to visit the school officially or to conduct religious services. . . . The prohibition is still observed, but chapel services are conducted regularly by the faculty and by visiting laymen; and this year the alumni of Girard College have named a clergyman as "the alumnus of the year"; Dr. Stanley R. West, rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, Conshohocken, Pa., who graduated from Girard in 1899. — A sign of the times?

\* \* \*

Supplementing an item in the previous issue of C. T. M. (p. 554) stating that the film "The Miracle," which had been approved for showing in New York State, but suppressed later "on the sole ground that Cardinal Spellman has called it blasphemous of Catholic doctrine." The Supreme Court, in a 9 to 0 decision, ruled that the State of New York does not have authority to ban showing of the movie "The Miracle" on the grounds that it is sacrilegious. The high court said that the New York State Board of Regents violated both the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution by denying a license for public exhibition of the movie, thereby reversing the decision of the New York State Court of Appeals which had upheld the ban.

The scope of the decision was such that it will affect censorship boards in other States as well as New York. The court made it clear that any censorship based on religious grounds is a probable violation of the First Amendment. Were the New York standard of "sacrilegious" to be accepted, the censor would be "set adrift upon a boundless sea amid a myriad of conflicting currents of religious views, with no charts but those provided by the most vocal and powerful orthodoxies. New York cannot vest such unlimited restraining control over motion pictures in a censor. Under such a standard the most tolerant and careful censor would find it virtually impossible to avoid favoring one religion over another and would be subject to an inevitable tendency to ban the expression of unpopular sentiments sacred to a religious minority. . . . The State has no legitimate interest in protecting any or all religions from views distasteful to them which is sufficient to justify prior restraints upon the expression of those views. It is not the business of Government in our nation to suppress real or imagined attacks upon a particular religious doctrine, whether they appear in publications, speeches, or motion pictures." . . . Justice Frankfurter, in a separate but concurring opinion, stressed that the New York court left wide open what persons, doctrines, or things are "sacred" or what constitutes "profaning" those things; he quotes, in an appendix, nearly 100 different definitions of the words "blasphemy" and "sacrilegious" which have appeared in standard English dictionaries from 1651 to 1952. "We not only do not know, but cannot know what is condemnable by 'sacrilegious'; and if we cannot tell, how are those to be governed by the statute to tell? It is this impossibility of knowing how far the form of words by which the New York Court of Appeals explained 'sacrilegious' carries the proscription of religious subjects that makes the term unconstitutionally vague." The three Justices, Frankfurter, Jackson, and Burton, concluded that "to criticize or assail religious doctrine may wound to the quick those who are attached to this doctrine and profoundly cherish it. But to bar such pictorial dissension is to subject non-conformists to the rule of sects."—This writer has not seen the film which called forth the court decision; perhaps the Cardinal was right. But the verdict of the Supreme Court seems eminently right and timely. Americans do not want a Roman Cardinal—or any clergyman—to dictate their verdict to a court, nor to see them set a standard of religion or morality to be enforced by our courts. Moreover, isn't there at least a little hint in the wording of the Supreme Court's verdict? If this first step is sanctioned, who will guarantee that sooner or later the censorship is not extended to

speeches and publications? I am trying to visualize what would happen to our history textbooks for schools and universities under Roman Catholic — or of any other denominational — censorship!

\* \* \*

Speaking at the ordination of eight ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church who are entering service as military chaplains, Chaplain (Colonel) Gynther Storaasli, U. S. A.-Ret., former chief of United States Army Air Forces chaplains and commandant of the Army chaplains' school, insisted that there is nothing in military service that makes a man go wrong. "On the contrary," he said, "everything about the Armed Forces tends to strengthen a man's character. Right now the Armed Forces have the finest program of moral and spiritual guidance in the history of the world's armies." He stressed a desperate need for at least 1,000 additional chaplains to continue this "excellent program," which has been developed largely since the end of World War II. He decried the tendency of mothers, educators, and religious leaders to criticize the Armed Forces for "every bad apple that turns up in uniform." A serviceman runs into temptations, he said, but that's no excuse for him to fall to them. Every man, no matter what his situation in life, must learn to meet and master temptation. When a man "goes wrong" in the service, it can be blamed only on a lack of moral training in the home — it's as simple as that. . . . Dr. Storaasli looks back upon 28 years of service as Lutheran military chaplain. He retired as colonel in 1948, at the age of 63, and is now serving as liaison man between the National Lutheran Council and the Armed Forces.

\* \* \*

Controversy in the German Church caused by Pastor Martin Niemöller's attitude toward Russian Communism seems to be increasing. Pastor Niemöller is president of the Evangelical Church in Hessen and Nassau and foreign secretary of the Evangelical Church in Germany. Dr. Hans Asmussen, a prominent German theologian of Kiel, resigned from the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, warning against the "mortal danger of the churches adjusting themselves to Communism under the influence of Pastor Martin Niemöller's ecumenical work. The danger," he said, "of the ecumenical movement engaging in politics has never been so great as it is at present, with Pastor Niemöller in charge of the Church's foreign relations." Later Professor Edmund Schlink of Heidelberg, in a message to Dr. Asmussen made public in Berlin, said that he was

"startled" over the inference that the World Council of Churches is tolerating Communism. "Communism has become more and more a problem to the World Council," Professor Schlink said. "Since 1950 the position of the Council toward the Churches in countries under Communist control has become increasingly difficult because these Churches regard the declaration on the Korean war passed by the Council's Central Committee as directed against the political system in their respective countries." The reference is to a meeting of the Central Committee in Toronto, Canada, in July, 1950, which condemned North Korea as an aggressor and expressed doubt as to the motives behind the Communist-inspired Stockholm "peace appeal"; because of this declaration Dr. T. C. Chao, Dean of the School of Religion in Yenching University, Peking, had resigned as a president of the World Council; Bishop Albert Bereczky of Hungary had asked that his status as a member of the Central Committee be changed to that of "merely an observer." Professor Schlink's argument was: The fact that these men leveled exactly the opposite charges against the World Council should have made Asmussen wonder. . . . He concluded his letter by emphasizing that he was "considerably concerned" about Pastor Niemoeller's political activities and saw in them "most detrimental consequences." All the more he felt it his duty to prevent already existing difficulties from being augmented by the spreading of incorrect statements. \* \* \*

Jesuits will open their 39th high school in the United States in Phoenix, Ariz., in the fall of this year. . . . More than one third of the 7,105 Jesuits in this country are engaged in educational work. Besides the 23,222 high school students under their care, they also operate 27 colleges and universities with a student enrollment of 86,696. The order serves an additional 45 colleges and schools in foreign mission areas. \* \* \*

Sweden is issuing a special series of postage stamps in honor of Olavus Petri, the leader of the Swedish Reformation, the man who first translated the Bible into Swedish. This year marks the 400th anniversary of his death. . . . Swedish postal authorities, however, faced a problem when they considered the design for the stamp; not a single picture of Petri remains; he was averse to sitting for a portrait. The stamps will therefore reproduce a design taken from a woodcut found in Petri's prayer book: a clergyman in an ancient pulpit preaching to his congregation.

THEO. HOYER

## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT. Edited by David Wesley Soper. Wilcox and Follett Company, Chicago, c. 1951. 126 pages, 5¾×8½. \$2.00.

Professor Soper of Beloit College, editor of *These Found the Way*, an anthology of expressions by converts to Protestant Christianity, herewith presents articles by four critics within Protestantism and a concluding article by himself on the unity of the Church. Interesting in his article is his stress on Luther's principle of the Church as an antidote to secularism and particularism in the Church. Chad Walsh writes on "The Reform of Protestant Worship." Nels F. S. Ferré writes on "Post-Critical Protestantism," impressing that tomorrow's Protestantism must preach the primacy of God as Creator, Christ Jesus as the Revelation of God in the flesh, the Holy Spirit as God's Sanctifier and Comforter, and the Church as the body of Christ and organ of God to the world. His article has an interesting other-worldly facet. Robert Earl Cushman of the Divinity School of Duke University writes on "New Testament Faith and the Mind of the Church Today." He defends the view of Christ which is by faith and gives a summary of the Christian message based on Acts and following C. H. Dodd. Mr. Cushman warns that "Modern Protestant Christianity is clearly on trial. . . . It is in danger of dying from sheer boredom with itself." (P. 95.) David Johnston Maitland writes on "Christianity and Work." He is a Congregational-Christian minister to students at the University of Wisconsin. His article concerns the problem of the Church to relate its message to the vocations and to the laboring classes.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

LUTHER DISCOVERS THE GOSPEL. New Light upon Luther's Way from Medieval Catholicism to Evangelical Faith. By Uuras Saarnivaara, Ph.D., Th.D. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. XV and 146 pages. \$1.95 net.

This book is entitled to more than a brief review in these columns. A longer discussion of the book will follow when time and space permits. Object of this notice is to recommend it to all our readers. It should really be a "must" for every Lutheran pastor and required reading for everyone who is not well informed—and has the desire to be better informed—as to the essence of the Gospel, which Luther learned from St. Paul and proclaimed to the world.

THEO. HOYER

WHAT AMERICANS BELIEVE AND HOW THEY WORSHIP. By J. Paul Williams. Harper and Brothers, Publisher, New York 16, N.Y., June 4, 1952. X+400 pages, 5½×8½. \$5.00.

This textbook in the field of Comparative Symbolics is written by a liberal theologian for students who seek an alleged least common denominator in all forms of beliefs and worship. The title indicates that the author does not restrict himself to the faith and practice of the various church bodies. His interest is to establish the basic "religious" motivations of the "un-churched" as well as the "churched" Americans. Lack of space compelled him to concentrate on only four non-ecclesiastical movements, astrology, hedonism, humanism, and nationalism. The adherents of these and many similar movements are said to have a vital faith and to be a potent factor in American life. The same is said to be true of Mormonism, Judaism, Christian Science. As the author takes the term "believe" in a very broad sense, so also the term "worship" denotes for him any "religious" devotion which may find expression in a person's absolute committal to his convictions and which need not be associated with a specific form of ritual or liturgy. By and large the book contains much factual information, interestingly presented in a somewhat journalistic style. The author covers the following topics:

- The Roman Catholic Church — defender of a revelation
- Protestantism (in general) — which reaffirms the faith
- Lutheran Churches — guardians of orthodoxy
- The Protestant Episcopal Church — which emphasizes ritual
- Presbyterian Churches — at the theological center
- Congregationalists and Unitarians — theologically liberal
- Baptists and Disciples — defenders of religious freedom
- Quakers — practicing mystics
- The Methodist Church — evangelical organization
- Judaism — the mother institution
- Some Recent Religious Innovations — experimentalists
- Some Non-ecclesiastical Spiritual Movements — which deny kinship
- The Role of Religion in Shaping American Destiny

It is of the essence of liberal theology to be extremely tolerant of every form of religion so long as its adherents refrain from every type of authoritarianism. Liberal theologians are therefore in no position to interpret justly the beliefs and worships of church bodies which accept the authority of God's Word. This is very evident in the author's attempt to interpret Lutheran theology and cultus. He does not understand the Lutheran doctrine of the *Una Sancta* and therefore completely misses the sense and spirit of the Lutheran Confessions. He actually seems to think that what Lutherans ascribe to the *Una Sancta* is to be applied to Lutheranism. To prove his point the author (p. 152) quotes Dr. Dau's fine statement on the unique character of Christianity, but makes it appear



that Dr. Dau is speaking of Lutheranism. Such an error is inexcusable, since Dr. Dau in the immediate context quotes Max Mueller, Thomas Arnold, and Mark Hopkins for the absolute uniqueness—not of Lutheranism—but of Christianity. A little checking might have revealed that the late Dr. Michelfelder—whose official position brought him very close to many W. C. C. leaders—and not a Missouri Synod editor coined the term "ecumaniacs." To us it seems to be in bad taste to charge the Missouri Synod with an intransigent spirit by an anecdotal reference to the protest against the ritual of the American Legion on the part of a group of Wisconsin Synod Lutherans.

F. E. MAYER

**THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.** By Herman Bavinck. Translated by William Hendriksen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 407 pages, 9×6. \$5.

Herman Bavinck was a Dutch theologian and political figure who lived at the close of the nineteenth century, teaching theological subjects first at the Theological School at Kampen (1883—1902) and then at the Free University of Amsterdam (1902—1921). A scholar of great erudition and literary activity, a famous pulpit orator who attracted to his services both the learned and the common people, a mold of theological, political, and cultural opinion, a simple Christian believer, who always evinced devout reverence for the divine Word, he is held in high regard wherever Calvinistic theology is cherished. His *magnum opus*, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, which between 1895 and 1918 was published in three editions, is now presented to English-speaking students by Dr. Wm. Hendriksen, professor of systematic theology at Calvin Seminary. The third edition of Dr. Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics* appeared in four large volumes, of which the first was a treatise of Fundamental Apologetics. In the second volume the author treats Theology Proper, or the Doctrine of God. It treats in particular: God's Incomprehensibility, Knowability, Names, Incommunicable Attributes, Communicable Attributes, the Holy Trinity, and God's Counsel (Predestination). The presentation of the subject-matter is not quite as lucid as is that of Hodge, but Dr. Bavinck's thoroughness, scholarliness, confutation of erring philosophies and heresies, as well as his earnest emphasis on Christian essentials, make the study of this somewhat quaint and outlandish Doctrinal Theology a profitable task.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES.** By Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. Edited by Samuel G. Craig; publ. by the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pa. 1952. \$4.50. 580 and xlviii pages.

This is the third volume in the series of Warfield's writings published by the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company. The first volume contained Warfield's articles on Inspiration and the Authority of

the Bible (cp. Book Review, C. T. M., 1950, p. 151) and the second volume his principal writings on the Person and Work of Christ (reviewed in C. T. M., 1950, p. 478). The third volume contains Warfield's principal writings on theology proper, predestination, faith, and related topics. The volume contains the following articles: Christian Supernaturalism; The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity; "God Our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"; The Divine Messiah in the Old Testament; The Supernatural Birth of Jesus; the Foresight of Jesus; Misconception of Jesus, and Blasphemy of the Son of Man; On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race; Imputation; Predestination; Are They Few That be Saved?; On the Biblical Notion of "Renewal"; On Faith in Its Psychological Aspects; Faith; Mysticism and Christianity; The Prophecies of St. Paul; God's Immeasurable Love; The Prodigal Son; The Leading of the Spirit; False Religions and the True.

All articles reflect Warfield's high scholarship, but also his Calvinistic orientation. The editor, Samuel G. Craig, has indebted himself to the reader by a splendid evaluation of Warfield as a theologian. Warfield (Nov. 5, 1857—Feb. 17, 1921) occupies the front rank of the modern Calvinistic apologists. He contended, on the one hand, for supernaturalism in salvation or for the absolute sovereignty of God; on the other hand, for the freedom of human will. Warfield meets the charge of holding an irreconcilable contradiction by stating that free will does not involve a choice in two directions, but a choice in accord with man's nature. This is the typical Augustinian view. The charge of particularism which is leveled at Calvinism is explained by Warfield as follows:

"The love of God is in its exercise necessarily under the control of His righteousness: to plead that His love has suffered an eclipse because He does not do all that He has the bare power to do, is in effect to deny to Him a moral nature. The real solution to the puzzle that is raised with respect to the distribution of the divine grace is, then, not to be sought along the lines either of the denial of the omnipotence of God's grace with the Arminians, or of the denial of the reality of His reprobation with our neo-universalists, but in the affirmation of His righteousness. The old answer is after all the only sufficient one: God in His love saves as many of the guilty race as He can get the consent of His whole nature to save. Being God and all that God is, He will not permit His ineffable love to betray Him into any action which is not right."

It certainly speaks well for conservative Reformed theologians that the republication of Warfield's studies is made possible.

F. E. MAYER

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